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Chamberlain Is Almost Firm

Prime Minister Chamberlain seems to be trying to give the appearance of firmness about Danzig, in order to prevent a Nazi coup there this summer. But as usual, his dike has a hole in it that somebody's thumb will have to plug. He might have said flatly, "Great Britain will tolerate no change in the status of Danzig." What he did say, in an extensive and roundabout way, was that if there were a change there brought about "by unilateral action, organized by surreptitious methods," and if Poland, believing the change endangered her national independence, were to take action to restore the status quo, Great Britain would support her in spite of the possible charge that such action constituted aggression. He added that "the present settlement, though it may be capable of improvement, cannot in itself be regarded as basically unjust or illogical," and while this was not a good time for negotiation, "it may be that in a clearer atmosphere possible improvements could be discussed."

Skeptics will be quick to point out (a) that Britain's promise still rests on Poland's decision to resist, (b) that Poland's decision may rest on the help she expects from Britain, (c) that this help cannot be great, at least in the early stages of a war, and that in any case a private word of warning from London would cause the Poles to hesitate in resisting. Also much depends on the help enlisted from the Soviet Union, which is reluctant to trust the Chamberlain government. So the "atmosphere" may "clear" and "possible improvements" may be "discussed" and broadened to include substantial concessions to Hitler. As long as Chamberlain governs, the fear of appeasement will live.

Deportation as Persecution

Important principles are involved in the deportation proceedings against Harry Bridges, leader of the CIO on the Pacific Coast. Bridges, born in Australia but for many years a resident of the United States, is charged with now being a member of "or affiliated with" an organization advocating the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence—namely, the Communist Party. Since the United States Supreme Court decision in the Strecker case, it is no longer enough for the government to show that Bridges may at one time have been a member of such a group. Bridges denies he is a member of the Communist Party. The Department of Labor is as usual putting the burden of proof on the defendant to show that he should not be deported, an odd variation on the fundamental doctrine that a man shall be considered innocent until the prosecution proves him guilty. As far as the merit of the charge goes, the whole case is a pack of nonsense. Bridges is a responsible and hard-working union official, of high abilities. He has not advocated

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revolution for many years past, if he ever did so. As for the Communist Party, it would be a little difficult for the government to prove that a party that advocated the election of the existing President is dedicated to upsetting it by violence. Bridges is being hounded by the professional patriots and such reactionary bodies as the Associated Farmers precisely because he is a good union man, skillful in collective bargaining. These agitators of reaction made such a hue and cry that they forced the Department of Labor into an action which the common sense of its officials must have told them constituted persecution.

The Dollar Stable Again

Conservatives in the Senate, after having compromised their principles by trading votes with the silverites to carry in their chamber a repeal of the President's power to devalue the dollar, met an ignominious defeat. They first prevented the passage of any monetary law before the end of the fiscal year by filibustering so that no vote could be taken on the conference report. But when this report was finally voted upon, the silverites, having got what they wanted from the House, deserted the coalition, and the President's power over the dollar was renewed. The stabilization fund to steady foreign exchange was made available again at the same time. We disagree with John T. Flynn, who writes in his department, "Other People's Money," that Congress should have taken the devaluation power from the President. Congress has not surrendered its constitutional prerogative, but has delegated it for two years only. Mr. Roosevelt has made it abundantly clear that he will not use this power again, unless it is necessary to check competitive depreciation in foreign exchange. His very possession of the power makes such competition unlikely. Congress could not act so swiftly as the administration in an emergency, and there would be no assurance of its acting at all. Continuing control over the dollar in the hands of the President at this time expresses the will of Congress that the power should be used in just this way.

My Country 'Tis of Thee

We don't like to gloat over a fellow citizen's misfortunes but we must confess our pleasure when we read about Allen A. Zoll's arrest on the charge of attempted extortion. Zoll has been an outstanding leader of various "lunatic-fringe" patriotic organizations. In addition to his position as commander of American Patriots, Inc., he holds the presidency of the American Federation against Communism and the chairmanship of the Committee for the Defense of American Constitutional Rights. Recently, Zoll has found time to help America by appearing in Washington to object on religious grounds to the appointment to the Supreme Court of Mr. Justice Frankfurter, and by organizing a rabble-Hotel which The New York Times reported as having "a definite anti-Semitic tinge." Zoll and his "Patriots" have even enlisted the recently arrested Fritz Kuhn and his Nazi Bund to help distribute circulars.

Last December, station WMCA refused to broadcast Father Coughlin's speeches unless the scripts were submitted in advance. Zoll, as commander of American Patriots, Inc., has taken an active part in organizing and leading the picketing of the radio station on Sunday afternoons ever since December 18. His object was to "make a horrible example of that station" on Father Coughlin's behalf. On Friday, June 30, so it is reported, the "great American patriot" told Flamm, president of WMCA, that for $7,500 he would remove the pickets, but if this price wasn't met he would double the number of men on the line. Flamm made a part payment of $200 in marked bills and Zoll's arrest followed. On July 7 he was indicted before the Grand Jury. Four days later Seward Collins, the man who posted bail for Mrs. Marie Griebl, wife of the fugitive Nazi spy, put up Zoll's $3,000 bail.

No Loan to Franco

Mr. Roosevelt has made clear that he stands opposed to the Fascist axis. He wishes to prevent the penetration of Fascist ideologies into South America, and plans to use some of this country's capital for that purpose, if Congress permits. But now we hear rumors that the United States is to advance credits to Franco's Spain so that it may buy surplus American cotton. A loan—even such a restricted loan—to the Spanish puppet of Hitler and Mussolini cannot be defended even on the ground that Franco could repay it. And he will certainly not turn democrat as a result. Is Mr. Roosevelt again about to act in a way that contradicts his words? Has he not injured the Spaniards enough already?

Sauce for the ABA Gander

In our hours of discouragement at the state of the world, it will long cheer us to think that we lived to see the day when the president of the American Bar Association denounced the Supreme Court of the United States. President Hogan thinks the Court is no longer a sacrosanct interpreter of the Constitution and that henceforth "reliance against the exercise of arbitrary power must be placed by the people in the legislative rather than in the judicial" branch. All of which means, of course, that the Court is no longer preventing Congress from doing what Mr. Hogan and his clients do not want it to do to business, and that if these laws are to be obviated, the remedy is to elect Congressmen of different opinions rather than rely on reactionary judges to invalidate legislation on constitutional grounds. And this is a complete surrender to the point of view of the progressives. It is much

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process than to allow outworn institutions and vested interests to seek protection under the shadow of judicial veto.

What Makes Building Expensive

Commenting editorially on the argument of the building unions that cutting of the WPA hourly wage endangers the regular union scale, The New York Times writes bluntly, "Such an argument as applied to the relief program is without substance." It then continues to speak of "an excessive wage scale," which "may be itself one of the chief causes of the unemployment." The Times here echoes an old and widespread prejudice against the wages of building workers—if the WPA cuts endanger these scales, so much the better.

But again and again it has been demonstrated by expert study that the high costs of building—and they *are* much too high—are not attributable to the pay of the workers. You could cut building wages to the bone without making much difference in the price of a finished city apartment. The high costs arise from a whole complex of forces such as high land values, finance charges, bad city planning resulting in high taxes for utilities, building codes which impede efficient methods, monopolistic practices on the part of sellers of materials and contractors, union rules, jurisdictional squabbles and connivance with monopolistic employers. Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold is on the right track in trying to cleanse the whole Augean stables at once. It's a heroic job, that nobody before has dared to tackle. Building workers could earn much more than they do if the industry were modernized and offered its product at a price that would stimulate construction.

Incidentally, our conservative friends might reflect that a large part of the trouble arises from the existence of conservative and sometimes corrupt craft unions, so stubbornly protected against the industrial-union principle of the CIO by their safe and sane AFL.

America's Twelve Corporations

The La Follette Civil Liberties Committee recently performed one more public service. It brought to light a group of America's biggest industrialists who have been plotting in secret against labor and the popular reforms of the New Deal. A "Special Conference Committee," composed of representatives from American Telephone and Telegraph, Bethlehem Steel, E. I. du Pont de Nemours, General Electric, General Motors, Goodyear Tire and Rubber, International Harvester, Irving Trust, Standard Oil of New Jersey, United States Rubber, United States Steel, Westinghouse Electric Manufacturing, and a large New York bank, has been meeting once a month to lay the plans "that it would not be wise" for employee representatives to appear at public hearings on NRA codes—and none appeared. For twenty years it has been "emphasizing to business people the disadvantages of labor disturbances." It planned "spontaneous" employee protests against the 1935 Wagner Act. "Special groups" have been formed all over the country to educate communities in the horrors of progressive and labor legislation, but only a few key men in each city knew of the Committee's existence, and it took pains to keep its correspondence confidential. It is clear that the La Follette committee ought to go further with its investigation. Hearings should be held. But Congress has not yet passed on the resolution appropriating new funds so that this—and other urgent jobs—can be done. Why doesn't Senator Byrnes report it out of committee?

News Notes of a Week

The government of Great Britain was hurrying through Parliament a bill authorizing it to give export credits up to $300,000,000 for the purchase of British munitions, raw materials and war supplies of all kinds. It was understood Poland would get the lion's share. . . . Count Galeazzo Ciano, Italy's Foreign Minister, visited Spain further to cement relations with the baby partner of the Axis. . . . The Nazis created an organization for Jews—the Reich's Union of Jews in Germany—"to speed up emigration and get the last Jew out of the Reich." The Reich disclaims all responsibility for needy Jews, who must be supported by a fund to which all emigrating Jews will be forced to contribute. . . . British officials said they believed the negotiators of the Anglo-Soviet pact could continue for another fortnight at least "without having to change the basis of the discussion and lose hope of a military alliance"—and also, it seemed, without concluding the pact. . . . The "miniature war" on the border of Outer Mongolia was described as a series of Japanese victories by dispatches from correspondents with the Japanese troops and from Japanese official sources.

Paul V. McNutt, High Commissioner of the Philippines and an active candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1940, was appointed Federal Security Administrator by President Roosevelt. Political observers took this to mean that Mr. McNutt would withdraw from the field if the President should seek the nomination. . . . The convention of the National Maritime Union in New Orleans accepted President Joe Curran's report asking that the convention endorse President Roosevelt for a third term, and then went to work shaking up the Gulf district organization, in which some officials had been accused of terrorism. . . . That big yeast company started advertising a new high-vitamin yeast for dogs, to keep them

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Roosevelt, Stalin and Neutrality

As the debate on neutrality nears its end in Congress two comments are required—one on the concrete issues under discussion and one on the general background.

The administration blundered as we said it was doing, in trying to force through this session of Congress a repeal of the arms embargo. The House declined to repeal the whole embargo, and the Senate is even less likely to do so. The action of the House was represented as encouragement to Hitler and Mussolini—a wholly unfortunate result. The administration blundered again in emphasizing this interpretation of the action. In so doing, President Roosevelt, Secretary Hull and the news interpreters sympathetic to their view greatly increased the psychological damage done by the action of the House itself. Under the old law, the European aggressors would have been able to buy nothing from us while Britain and France could buy everything they wanted in the way of supplies—except arms. Under the amendment adopted by the House, the arms embargo was so weakened that airplanes and unfinished parts of weapons could also be bought by the "democracies." As a matter of fact, this was a further check to the dictators and would have appeared so if it had not been for the official White House propaganda.

There are reports that the Senators favoring strict neutrality will now kill the whole amendment by filibuster rather than permit this loophole through the arms embargo to become law. If they really are more interested in keeping America at peace than they are in formulas and political revenge, they will be ill advised in doing so. For the cash-and-carry provision, applying, in the President's discretion, to everything except arms, expired automatically on May 1, and this was in fact a much greater protection of our neutrality than the absolute embargo on munitions. It would be fatal to be without it if a war should start. The law must be amended to restore or strengthen it, even if in doing so the category of "implements of war" is transferred, as in the House bill, from embargo to cash-and-carry.

Now for the larger aspects of the matter. No argument is more prevalent against any attempt to keep out of a future war than the bland assertion that we cannot possibly do so—and that since we cannot, we had better concentrate on the effort to prevent war from occurring. The only way to do that, it is then declared, is to make clear at the beginning which side we shall be on. The argument would be less suspect if those who advanced it really wanted to keep out of war. In that case they might be a little more critical of their own defeatism before they announced it so positively including some of their own words—that many of those who argue in this way are not really defeatist at all. Their chief aim is not to keep out of war. They would much rather have this country fight than to see Britain, France and the Soviet Union contend against Germany and Italy without our military aid.

We wonder, however, how those who think in this way account for the present behavior of the Soviet Union in its discussions with Great Britain about a military alliance. If it is true that in case of a great war every important power must become involved, and if peace is in fact indivisible, then this truth applies much more directly to the Soviet Union than to the United States.

Russia is not separated from Europe by three thousand miles of ocean. Hitler has menaced her continually. She has an alliance with France already. She is intimately and directly concerned with Hitler's probable next moves. Yet the hard-headed statesmen in the Kremlin are acting as if they believed that the Soviet Union could really choose whether to enter the next war or not. And Britain is also acting as if Moscow could choose. If the negotiations mean anything at all, they mean that Moscow intends not to enter the war unless it gets its terms underwritten in advance by London. If this were not true, why does Stalin bother to ask for all these concessions, and why does Chamberlain bother to grant any? All Chamberlain would have to do would be to start fighting, and Russia would "inevitably" be drawn in.

This logic holds, no matter what reason we may assign for Stalin's behavior. Is he afraid the Soviet Union would be left to fight Germany alone? That implies that Britain and France could stay out. Does he hope to remain neutral while Hitler and Mussolini attack in the west? If he could, so could we. Or is he just suspicious of the British Tories and French conservatives and is he making sure that the Soviet Union would not fight except for aims that would really benefit his state and his people? If he can make terms in the interest of his responsibilities, so can we. There is no good reason why the President of the greatest democracy in the world should be less shrewd and realistic than the dictator of the Soviet Union.

If it is necessary above all things now to frighten the Nazis and Fascists out of making war, and to stiffen British and French backbones, what can we make out of Moscow's hesitations? The Soviet Union's action at the moment must be far more influential in this critical situation than our choice between various shades of neutrality, all of which leave the preponderance of our economic power at the disposal of the British and French.

The hackneyed generalities of the collective-securityites simply will not hold any longer. We assuredly can stay out of war if we really want to. The neutrality

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ing the pressures on the side of our going in, and so of freeing our decision from irrelevant issues.

Let us not go any further toward participation than we have already gone, at least until we can be sure what we should be fighting for.

WPA Nemesis

THE WIDESPREAD WPA STRIKES on construction projects are bad enough, but they are only a taste of the trouble that is in store for this country as an indirect result of the WPA law that the Republican and Democratic reactionaries have forced through Congress. Comments on these strikes by the press and officials have almost entirely missed the point, just as the point of the WPA itself has been missed in most of the public discussions. Enemies of federal work relief, however, know well what they are doing, and through this initial disturbance their purposes begin to become apparent. They are not primarily concerned with governmental economy. What they really want is much broader than this. They are mobilizing an attack on American wage standards in private employment. They want to undermine and weaken the labor movement. And they want to destroy the relatively new principle that the government is responsible for the minimum welfare of the citizens.

The usual argument against the strikers runs somewhat as follows. They are now working a small number of hours per month for the money they get. Why should they object if they are required to work a reasonable length of time—no longer than the hours previously required of unskilled employees? After all, it is absurd to strike against government relief. You are simply taking yourself off the rolls if you do. The government need not offer relief. It does not get anything in return, like private employers who make a profit. The strikers aren't hurting the government—or the rest of us—by refusing to accept the terms offered. They can't possibly win.

But the men who are striking do not object to work. Nor are they attempting to dictate the total that the government should pay them over a week, a month or year. They are, however, union members, and their unions have wage standards, fixed by contracts in each locality, and specifying what an hour's work is worth for each trade. It is part of a union man's creed not to help break the standard of his comrades by working for less per hour than the union scale. Such competition, once started, is likely to spread, especially in a time of surplus labor. Least of all should the government, part of whose economic policy is to prevent wage-cutting, begin the process. From the time of the inauguration of federal relief until the present, the government's policy has coincided with the union's views in this matter.

Nor is relief to be regarded as pure gratuity on the part of a generous state. Federal, state and local governments have received products of incalculable value from the work of WPA employees. If progress on schools, on airports or roads is slowed up by strikes, the public does lose something very tangible indeed. Furthermore, the whole relief policy is hardly a philanthropic one. It is rather an acknowledgment that no society can endure the enforced worklessness of millions of its citizens. The citizens in question are likely to have something forceful to say about its organization and management if they are allowed to starve for lack of jobs. More than this, no decent society can forego the enormous waste incident to so much unused labor. And finally, the whole society is likely to be thrown into turmoil and disaster if so many out of work are left upon the labor market to compete with those who have jobs. The reduction of standards, the loss of values, the disorganization of institutions that are the inevitable results of cut-throat competition of this kind were illustrated in the United States in the year 1932. Protection of civilized standards in private industry is perhaps the chief point of the WPA.

The new law was framed as if it were a deliberate effort to undermine these purposes. Its first effects, resulting from the abolition of the "prevailing wage" practice, are visible now. If the strikers are defeated, the logical result will be an attack on wage standards in the construction and other industries, by private employers. Next we shall see the result of dumping on the labor market the large numbers that will have to be deprived of public employment because of the reduction in the size of the fund, the limitation of public projects to those costing not more than $52,000, and other restrictions. Then will come the effect of the automatic discharge of all employees who have been on the WPA for eighteen months or more. Altogether, it is certain that at least 750,000 and perhaps a million or two persons will be thrown into the labor market by these provisions. Then the complaint by employers that the government is "artificially" maintaining wages will be largely eliminated. They can slash at will, as they did before the New Deal began.

If Congress wants to sanction a national drive to reduce wages, to destroy unions, to reduce standards of living and to throw the nation into the dissension and turmoil that such a drive would cause, it can do no better than to stand by the law as it was passed. For the reactionary complaints against the WPA, when subject to analysis, almost all mean that the government was standing in the way of just these things. They mean that the otherwise jobless workers prefer the standards of pay and employment obtainable under the government to those that they could get under private industry—if they could get any at all. Those who designed the law must have cherished the inten-

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close-fisted employers. If Congress does want to keep itself aligned with these forces, it must make up its mind to the fact that the trouble has just begun.

Already those formerly hostile bodies—the CIO, the AFL and the Workers' Alliance—have made common and determined cause against this policy. Already there are 100,000 men on strike all over the country. The least penalty that a Congressman might reasonably expect from continued support of the new law would be to be quietly and decently retired from office by voters at the next election.

Louisiana, There She Lies

SCANDALOUS CONDITIONS have lately been exposed in Louisiana. It is a safe assumption, moreover, that the situation is like an iceberg, with at least six-sevenths still under water.

Credit for the exposure of corruption in the Huey Long machine which still rules Louisiana years after that would-be dictator was killed goes to two New Orleans newspapers, The States and The Times Picayune. More than a year ago they exposed the fact that everyone on the state payroll had to kick back five percent of his salary to the machine. On June 9, The States published photographs of a Louisiana State University truck delivering building materials to the site of a house being erected by James McLachlan, who is a friend of Governor Leche and was a colonel on his staff. The States showed that window sash, door frames and other materials had been processed in the university workshop. Governor Leche revealed a lively desire to find out where The States had got its information, but no desire whatever to clean up the situation. When the two newspapers (under common ownership) demanded that the university's books be opened for inspection, the Governor, according to a report in Editor and Publisher, said they were making "cheap and untrue insinuations."

Then a few days later Drew Pearson and Robert Allen, in their syndicated column, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," charged that WPA labor and materials had been used for the benefit of Governor Leche and other high state officials. The Governor's only answer was to resign. He was succeeded by another member of Huey Long's machine, his brother Earl, whose role had been entirely insignificant until Huey's death.

When an investigation of the State University was started, its president, Dr. James Monroe Smith, fled to Canada. The Louisiana state police obligingly took no action until he had a long head start, but frightened by the newspaper publicity, Dr. Smith gave himself up. He had been speculating in wheat with [illegible] collateral [illegible] in appear to have been forged.) Dr. Smith got $300,000 from three banks, on behalf of the university, though this money never reached any university account. Among the reporters who greeted him when he came back on his way to jail were two former LSU students whom he had dismissed because they spoke in the pages of a college newspaper too frankly for the Huey Long machine.

Half a dozen investigations into Louisiana affairs are now in progress. It remains to be seen whether any of them will do more than whitewash the charnel house. The Louisiana state administration is still the nest of Huey Long political racketeers it has been for decades. Until the past few weeks, the Roosevelt administration in Washington has been a firm friend of the Long gang. After Huey's death a bargain was struck; the machine agreed to support the national administration in Louisiana, and Washington dropped its investigation of corruption in that state. Attorney General Frank Murphy has recently started out like a new broom; Louisiana will prove an excellent test of his sincerity.

The most important aspect of this whole story seems to us to be the one which, so far as we know, has hardly been mentioned in any Northern newspaper. The rottenness of the Long administration has been going on for years, yet nobody did anything about it except a couple of newspapers and a pair of syndicated columnists. Suppose that The New Orleans States and The Times Picayune had stood in with the gang, as newspapers do in numerous other cities. Suppose Pearson and Allen were a little less energetic in digging up facts, as many columnists are. Presumably the scandals would still be unexposed. The problem of creating machinery, and a public sentiment to support that machinery, for the periodically necessary housecleaning in politics remains one of the unsolved enigmas of American public administration.

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America Revisited: II

V

THE LABOR MOVEMENT, during my months in America, was almost wholly occupied with the conflict between the CIO and the AFL. I saw little of that conflict at its center; I saw a good deal of it at various points on its circumference. My impression was uniformly that the rank and file of both movements resent the conflict. They feel that there are no real principles in conflict; that it is vested interests and personal ambitions that prevent settlement of a dispute that ought never to have occurred. They realize that no one, except the employers, profits from its continuance. Taken as a whole, I found, with certain notable exceptions, the officials of the CIO a better type of man than those of the AFL. They were more socially conscious. They had a keener sense of the significance of the changes in which they were involved. They were more interested in the intellectual problems of modern trade unionism. In part, no doubt, this was because they were usually younger men. The AFL officials tended to be men in the fifties and sixties who were born in the strong-arm school of craft unionism, had become, by success, business agents who happened to be in trade unions instead of being factory executives, and were not profoundly interested in problems beyond the immediate issues of their craft. Outside New York, it was pretty universally discouraging to find how little interest there was in the need for trade unionism to develop an educational program, or to realize how rapidly the time approaches when independent political action on the part of labor will be the inescapable condition of a progressive movement.

I found passionate devotion to Mr. Lewis among the rank and file of his movement; I never found any such enthusiasm for Mr. Green. Mr. Lewis was a living force to his members. Mr. Green was a remote bureaucrat whose purposes and policies were examined with an almost cynical indifference. It seemed to be assumed that his real complaint against Mr. Lewis was that the latter threatened his retention of a comfortable job. No one, even among Mr. Green's own followers, argued that he was a statesman defending a great principle of social organization. And many of those followers agreed that the future was with Mr. Lewis' philosophy. They admitted frankly that the mass of the workers were eager for peace and that they themselves would openly demand it if they dared do so without jeopardizing their own position. Some of them characterized certain leaders of the AFL as hardly better than racketeers. I found, I may add, almost universal approval of the Wagner Act and equally the AFL to its amendment. "One would think," said a Western official to me, "that Mr. Green was the president of the NAM. Here on the Pacific Coast the Wagner Act has done for us in two years what the IWW could not accomplish in a generation; and it has done it without bloodshed."

The internal conflict of labor has done it, I fancy, a good deal of harm with average civic opinion. My own disappointment was to discover how little the mind of the business man has been affected by the changes of the last six years. He has forgotten, or does not choose to remember, why Mr. Roosevelt was returned in 1932, and triumphantly reëlected in 1936. He suppresses his memories of investigations like those of Judge Pecora and Senator La Follette. He is largely ignorant of the facts about how the National Labor Relations Board has actually operated, and is eager to believe anything that might discredit it; one large employer, to whom, after a discussion, I gave a copy of Professor Brooks's "Unions of Their Own Choosing," frankly denied that it was true. They both fear and dislike the unemployed; and they repeat to nauseation the kind of tale current in England fifteen years ago about their unwillingness to look for jobs. They resent experiments like the TVA; and they reëcho most of the old shibboleths about the inefficiency of governmental operation without regard to the massive body of facts which now exist on the other side. They think that unions in England are responsible for their wrongful acts; and having over long years hated and despised the AFL, they are now almost prepared to embrace it, out of their fear and hatred of the CIO. One seldom meets an employer who has not some tale to tell of labor corruption or irrationality. But it never seems to occur to them that they have, as a rule, been equal partners in the corruption, and that a history they have mainly made has been largely responsible for what of irrationality there is. Few of them, again, have any real conception of the great, secular forces that are transforming the nature of American economic life. They speak of the leaders of American finance and industry as though they were demigods; and they conveniently forget the degree to which those leaders were responsible for the reckless extravagances of the Coolidge epoch.

I found, this is to say, the American business man less changed in basic outlook than any other type with whom I came into contact. For him, the golden age was the presidency of Calvin Coolidge; and he thinks of Mr. Roosevelt as one who has been led to betray his class by irresponsible doctrinaires. Of course there

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since the Wagner Act, which he had accepted cheerfully as long overdue, his relations with his men had been better than in a generation of business experience. I note also that wherever I went two facts stood out with prominence. The college-trained business man was, in general, more reactionary and less adaptable than one who had been brought up in the school of hard knocks; and the hardest type of all was the business man who had been trained as a lawyer and shifted over to an executive place on the finance side of a big corporation. In general, further, I noticed that one found more extreme types of reaction, as also of a progressive outlook, in the West, and especially the Northwest, than in the East. The frontier psychology has, no doubt, persisted there; and, especially in California and Washington, the grim conditions of past conflict have left, on both sides, an enduring bitterness not yet removed by time. Nor will it, I think, grow less until there is a definitive recognition that the era of collective bargaining has now become a permanent part of the social landscape of America.

VI

An Englishman is always told of the remoteness of America from Europe, of how difficult it is to make its problems understood by the Middle and the Far West. My own experience is very different. I wish I felt that there was the same knowledge of American problems in Europe as there is of European problems in America; and I wish, particularly, that it was possible to interest university students in Great Britain in those problems as easily as one can interest American students in British affairs.

The American people is profoundly pacifist in temper. It hates the idea of war; it loathes those who, like Hitler and Mussolini, pursue policies which it judges to be in the long run incompatible with peace. But it is extremely suspicious of Mr. Chamberlain; and I, certainly, have never known a time when British prestige has stood lower in the United States. Men and women do not trust Mr. Chamberlain's *bona fides*. They suspect the reality of his democratic professions. They believe him to be more concerned with the interests of his class than with the maintenance of the conditions of a just peace. The long list of dubious surrenders to aggression has sunk deep into the American consciousness. The betrayal of Czecho-Slovakia has been taken hard. I think it is fair to say that the removal of Mr. Chamberlain from the premiership would do more to improve Anglo-American relations than any other change in political personnel one can imagine.

One curious element in the problem of American thinking is worthy of note. Few Americans but will tell you of the immense blunders of British foreign policy in recent years. The Sino-Japanese dispute, Ethiopia, opinion seems to be that Britain has sacrificed national interest to class interest through the blind prejudice of her government. Yet, at the same time, opinion attributes to Great Britain a skill in diplomatic maneuver and propagandist influence, a power of presenting dubious purposes attractively, for which I, at any rate, can see little evidence. No doubt the intensity of propaganda in the United States is so great as to awaken suspicions on every hand. But I thought the students of a Midwestern university were going a little far when they warned their fellows against me as an emissary of Mr. Chamberlain because I believed in the principle of collective security.

I found no universal trend in American opinion on foreign affairs except a deep hatred of the dictators. Isolationism was widespread, especially among the young; the belief was profound that America was "sold" in 1917-19, and would be "sold" again if it entered a European war. But there was also a widespread feeling, especially among those who remembered the last war, that neutrality was no longer a working hypothesis of international action. I found a good deal of simple faith in mechanical techniques for keeping out of war, like support for the Ludlow resolution; and there was, especially on the Left, a simplification of the causes of war which made more for comfort than for understanding. On the Right, there was an eager desire to insist that there is no difference between Germany and Italy, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other. Here, no doubt, the influence of the trials and the purges has been wholly evil. They have revived all the suspicions that were being allayed by the resumption of normal relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. These suspicions have been intensified by Soviet secretiveness and the follies of its censorship. On the other hand, much of the criticism of the Soviet Union is curiously *simpliste*. There is a naïve wonder that a country which, in 1917, was illiterate and ruined by war, should not, after twenty-two years, rival the American standard of living; and the inability to see the problems of the Russian Revolution in terms of Russian conditions is widely prevalent. Americans shut their eyes in a rather special way to things they do not like. They are afraid of the world implications of the Russian Revolution. The more comfortable they are, the more eagerly they seize on any evidence to prove that its achievements have not been commensurate with the price that has been paid for them. Yet the same people have no doubt of the ultimate beneficence of the Civil War, even though it is clear that, even after seventy-five years, the South has not yet recovered from its desolation.

VII

The main feeling about America that one has in re-

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ration. Great Britain seems strained and fatigued. One's friends seem all much older, less eager to experiment, more constrained to accept an ugly fate than to master it. It is those qualities of energy and exhilaration that make me believe that America has a chance not given to ourselves, of creative innovation on the grand scale and in a peaceful way, if it seizes the opportunity while there is time.

But to do so requires one thing which is not, I think, sufficiently realized in America. The forces which tend to fascism are strong, and it is not difficult to see how easily circumstances (a new depression, for instance) would give them their opportunity. From that angle, the most important need in America is the consolidation of the progressive forces. They ought to be more interested in their identities and less interested in their differences. They ought to understand that the New Deal, whatever its inadequacies, has at least given them time to think out the basis of that realignment of social forces which is so urgent in America. But they will only be able to continue thinking by continuing the New Deal. From that angle, the election of 1940 is pivotal. It means the certainty that a liberal Supreme Court will continue (otherwise, its complexion may easily swing Right once more). It means time to heal the split in the labor movement. It means the full utilization of the great measures of the Roosevelt government instead of the danger of their being hamstrung. It means, in a word, vital reinforcement of the tradition, beginning to take hold of the common man, that America was made for ordinary people, that the time has come to redefine the terms of the property relation. But if there is to be a liberal victory in 1940, the liberals will need far more tenacity and far more unity than they now display. Their present impact upon opinion-making is weakened at every point by their emphasis on differences of doctrinal minutiae instead of agreement upon the larger purpose. They bewilder those who might be their friends; thereby they give aid and encouragement to those who are permanently their enemies. So much of the future of America depends upon presenting a common front to the forces of privilege that the effort to find a basis of agreement cannot begin too soon.

HAROLD J. LASKI

London

The TVA Yardstick

In his address at Portland, Oregon, in September, 1932, President Roosevelt declared that public benefit would result from the establishment of "national yardsticks" by which to measure and regulate the service of the electric-utilities industry. He referred to four such yardsticks under construction or contemplated: the St. Lawrence, Muscle Shoals, Boulder Dam and the Columbia River projects.

The idea of national yardsticks met prompt opposition which would have smothered the use of a term less dramatic and interesting. Although this propaganda could not kill the term, it did succeed in befogging the public. It was alleged that conditions are never alike for any two companies; large-scale federally owned projects must be radically different from private companies; a common measuring device cannot be found by which to judge the relative efficiency of private and public enterprise; it would be unjust and destructive of private enterprise to attempt it. All of this is true if one should attempt to compare wholes consisting of different combinations of variables, but wrong in its implication that one is compelled so to do.

Now comes the report of the Congressional Joint Committee Investigating the Tennessee Valley Authority. A by-product of the report is the Committee's findings concerning the yardstick.

The Committee concludes that a yardstick is desirable. The production and distribution of electricity is a monopoly, and has been permitted to operate essentially on a cost-plus basis with incentives in favor of high costs and high rates. There should be some means of determining the effect of these circumstances on the cost of electricity to consumers. The Committee concludes further that the yardstick is not to be sought in the internal operations, costs and prices of the TVA itself, with its particular combination of conditions, but rather in the operations, costs and rates of agencies distributing to ultimate consumers. It concludes that the differences in retail rates do provide an accurate measure of distribution costs over a wide range of conditions, good for comparisons among all distributors and throughout the country. TVA distributors and private ones all start with approximately the same wholesale costs, distribute in accordance with practically the same basic engineering technique, and have a common system of accounting prescribed by the Federal Power Commission.

The distributors for the TVA do have the advantage of coöperation from other government agencies, but on the other hand bear a much heavier burden of charges to depreciation. The tax burden of TVA distributors is equivalent to that of private distributors. Yet the public distributing agencies charge lower rates to the consumer than do the private companies.

The essential difference between public and private industry that makes possible the [illegible]

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methods. The public industry seeks maximum service at lowest cost, and invites increase of consumption by promotional rates and other progressive marketing methods; the private industry seeks cost-plus profits, and is much less inspired to lower costs through increase of consumption.

The yardstick is not merely a measuring device with which to make comparisons; it also becomes a regulating device. And it is not merely a regulatory device; it tends to establish a competitive situation, of great benefit to consumers. Not only do TVA distributors offer lower rates than private competitors; private competitors have been compelled to lower their rates, and consumption has increased with no loss of earnings. The following table is offered in the report:

	—1933—		—1937—	
	Average rate cents	Average kilowatt-hours per year	Average rate cents	Average kilowatt-hour year
United States average.....	5.49	595	4.39	793
Tennessee Electric Power Co.	5.77	612	2.86	1,353
Georgia Power Co.	5.16	803	3.04	1,313
Alabama Power Co.	4.62	793	2.97	1,289
Tennessee Valley Authority..	...	...	2.00	1,465

Moody's Manual informs us that these private companies as a group were in 1937 enjoying an 11 percent greater net income than in 1933.

The findings of the Committee should go a long way toward clarifying public thought concerning the yardstick. Yet even the Committee seems to be impressed by the "my-business-is-different" theory and to accept the claim that yardsticks can measure accurately only identical aggregates. The most advanced industrial managements long ago ceased to pay serious attention to the "my-business-is-different" concept in appraising efficiency in management.

It should be noted that the principal purpose of measuring devices is to discover differences. If all objects were identical in length, breadth, weight and other characteristics, there would be little need for measurement. Of course some shoemaker would have to mark off the dimensions of a human foot on a stick in order to make the first shoe, but after that there would be little need of further measurement if all feet were identical.

In human affairs it is especially differences that we desire to measure, in order to ascertain which of different factors and combinations of factors is the more suitable for a given purpose. The practice of keeping cost records that yield only over-all costs for a product is still widespread throughout industry, but among the best managements the practice is to record the costs of the component units of operations and, in planning, to compute over-all costs from combinations of these units. This makes it possible to calculate over-all costs for

The writer once visited an automobile plant at the time it was planning to change from a four to a six-cylinder model. The industrial engineer had just calculated in advance the cost of a seven-bearing crankshaft. He had data based on crankshafts for four-cylinder cars which told him the cost of materials and machining of any kind of bearing, and he could calculate the cost of a new crankshaft involving any combination of all kinds of bearings.

Government should keep the cost of every unit factor in transmitting and distributing electricity under every different operating condition. Private industry should do likewise. Thereupon the yardstick of rates with accompanying costs would become generally applicable. Unit costs could be compared with unit costs, and combinations of unit costs with other identical and different combinations. Because differences in combinations reflect differences in purpose, policy and procedures, that combination which best serves the public could be determined.

Many variable policy and management factors and their combinations, which have heretofore defied analysis because of lack of unit costs, would become measurable by the yardstick device. Among them are: the presence or absence of striving for profit; multiple use of facilities; cost of money; mass production and transmission; mass promotional effort; depreciation of investment; regularization of the tax burden; modes of construction of distribution lines; promotional rates and other progressive marketing methods; low retail-rate schedule; coöperative nature of distribution organizations; variation in local scales of wages and requirements of service.

The far-reaching significance of the yardstick is not yet appreciated in the United States. The ultimate value of TVA experience is incalculable. We have called attention to the influence of the TVA in creating a competitive market. If expansion of our economy depends on breaking monopoly and quasi-monopoly influence on the price structure, then the instrument is at hand. If legislation and regulation continue to prove impotent, the people can turn to the procedure of injecting a public enterprise into any industry, and by yardstick measurement establish prices that will ward off overinvestment, squeeze the water out of overcapitalizations, prevent excess profits under the guise of "earnings" and yet leave a reward for everyone in the industry, private as well as public, who renders a genuine social and economic service. This is the device by which the Swedish government, for instance, assures to its people low-cost electric energy; and by which coöperatives in that country have broken monopoly prices of several widely used industrial products. However, in respect of businesses having inherent monopoly characteristics on a national scale, only the "national yardstick" of a federal enterprise can be effective.

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Just Before Zero

THERE SEEMS TO BE general agreement that the present European crisis is the worst of all. It is quite possible of course that war will be averted for the present through another application of the appeasement formula; but no such solution of the question of Danzig, for example, brings any hope of lasting peace. Not one statesman in Europe, so far as I can see, is lifting a finger to try to create permanent peace. They act to postpone the crisis from day to day, but most of all, they try to be as strong as possible in the next war, both by enlarging their defenses at home and by creating the greatest possible network of alliances abroad.

This is true in general even though Mr. Chamberlain sometimes acts as though he would rather yield to the Nazis by himself than to win over them with the aid of Soviet Russia. If he yields, fascism will conquer most of Europe and will then turn its attention to Asia and the Western Hemisphere. If the alliance with Russia proves to be real, the chance still seems to me better than even that there will be war within three or four years unless Germany collapses first—and we cannot count on any such collapse.

It can truly be said, therefore, that we are face to face with the most serious crisis in the history of civilization; and it is dismaying to find how universally men's minds turn only to thoughts of force and the immediate appeal to arms. It is quite true that a firm alliance of Great Britain, France and Russia is desperately needed at the present moment; that without it, Hitler probably cannot be stopped and that with it there is a good chance that he can, at least for the present. Yet even if war should come, it must some day be concluded with peace terms; and these peace terms will involve conditions on which victor and vanquished can continue to live together in the world. They will no doubt involve formulas for international trade, access to raw materials, stabilization of currencies, control of colonies. If the past is a guide to the future, the losing nation or set of nations will be treated with great injustice, will develop a smoldering pathological desire for revenge, and will presently be turning all their energies in that direction. We shall then be about where we are now except that we shall have killed off X millions of our best young men (and women too, very likely), shall have bombed our fairest cities from the air, destroyed many of the greatest works of man, gone through all the dreary catalogue of war's abhorrent carnival of waste.

It would seem the most obvious and sensible question in the world to ask: Can't we have the peace conference before the war? Can't we [illegible] series of concrete acts through the decades to come? Yet singularly few are asking any such questions.

There are those, I know, who will deny that such questions can be asked at all. They will tell you that Hitler is mad, Mussolini is mad, the military clique in Japan is as far from the rational world as a hydrophobic dog. There is a good deal of sense in such a contention; yet we cannot for our own sakes assume that it is wholly true and act on the assumption. There are, we know, people in all these countries who disapprove of the deeds of their rulers, people who are anxious to live in a rational community of nations and are capable of doing so. If we have reached the point where our only possible course is to destroy these countries as Carthage was destroyed, then the grounds for despair are ample indeed.

It is important for another reason that we should continue to act as though Germans, Italians and Japanese were normal human beings. It is desirable that we should keep our record straight because the character of the record makes our future to a tremendous degree. And it gives us an opportunity to test the good faith of our potential allies in the struggle that is already described as being one "to make the world safe for democracy." The ready propagandists are painting us a picture of England, France and perhaps Russia as pure and noble nations fighting on behalf of the purest and noblest motives. It may be that they are; but so far as England and France are concerned at least, there is no concrete evidence. No Englishman has said: "If the United States will join us in this holy crusade, we shall set India free." No Frenchman has offered to barter Indo-China for our invaluable aid in this great cause. If we act now like reasonable and rational men, we can expose, with the highest usefulness, the real meaning of democracy in present-day terms.

There is a specific value in a statement of respectable war aims before a conflict begins. Such a statement is a guarantee to the participants on the side of the democracies that they really are fighting for a worthy cause, that they will not be sold out as they were twenty years ago. While such a statement raises the morale on one side, it correspondingly helps to break the spirit of those on the other. We have but to remember the effect of Wilson's Fourteen Points to see that that is true—and the Fourteen Points were only a unilateral declaration of the head of one country. They came, moreover, late in the conflict, long after its ideological character had hardened.

I suggest therefore, in this unparalleled crisis, a

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war" that is already going on and has been going on for years.

2. The armistice would be solely for the purpose of seeking to investigate possible peace terms in advance of the war, instead of after its termination. It should be for a limited period—perhaps four or five months (the time table proposed is tentative and comparatively unimportant).

3. Great Britain and France and, if she will, Soviet Russia, should engage in immediate, strictly secret discussions for the purpose of preparing a possible set of terms to be offered to the Fascist bloc. It is essential that complete secrecy should be maintained until the terms have been agreed upon, since we know by experience that in the modern world nothing is accomplished any more by conferences in which the delegates spend their time making speeches for the populations at home.

The purpose of the conference would be, as Sir Arthur Salter has suggested, to create a set of peace terms which must be accepted or rejected as a group and go into effect simultaneously, or as near to simultaneously as possible.

Is there any reason to believe that Great Britain would be willing to undertake such a conference? There is only one: the fact that it came from the United States. The English rightly consider that the assistance of this country may mean the difference between winning and losing the next war, as it did the last one. They are desperately eager for American assistance—far more eager than they will be after the fighting is actually started, when they will correctly assume that the drift of events will help to force us into becoming an ally. It would be easy and quite legitimate for the United States to make the holding of such a conference a preliminary condition to American aid. We can now see how dreadful was the error of President Wilson, who refused to make any stipulations regarding American participation in the Great War, refused even to hear the details of the secret treaties when the English conscientiously tried to tell him about them. It is hard to believe that any country would make this colossal blunder twice in less than a generation; yet we seem to be headed precisely toward a repetition.

I admit that it is possible, certainly, that the outcome of such a conference would be merely more appeasement, the handing over to Germany of additional territory—not belonging to the conferees. If, however, England and France want to follow the path of appeasement, they do not need a conference suggested by the President of the United States to cause them to embark on such a course. If they intend to yield, yield they will.

It is further possible that these terms would be rejected by the axis powers. But if they were, I do not see that the world would be any worse off than it is today. Certainly, it would be no nearer to war. Meanwhile they would be tremendously bettered in the eyes of their own people and everyone else if they had made public a set of peace terms and these peace terms had turned out to be reasonably decent ones.

If President Roosevelt invited such a conference and it were held, would the United States then be morally committed to participating on the side of the allies in whatever consequences should flow from the gathering? There is no valid reason why this should be true. If the aims prove to be of a kind acceptable to the American public as a whole, it may be that we ought in fact to take up the commitment. If these aims should prove on examination to be unacceptable to us, we would have a valid reason for abstention. What is happening today is that we are being committed, through repeated acts and speeches of President Roosevelt, to a far greater extent than most people realize, and without any promises from our potential allies of any kind, without our knowing whether we would be deceived again as we were in 1917-18.

What are the possible terms that could come out of such an international conference as I suggest? The temptation to write a list is strong but I resist it. Anyone can draw up a Utopia; but there is little point in having private citizens describe the desirable impossible. It is enough to say that there are conditions which could be proposed by the democracies to the Fascist powers, conditions that would not constitute appeasement but would indicate the firm line beyond which there will be no retreat.

It is easy to find objections to my proposal; I could point out a number of them myself. But no critic has the right to sweep this proposal away unless he can bring forward an alternative of his own that will have the same general purpose. For we are drifting rapidly toward the brink of Niagara.

BRUCE BLIVEN

No Man Knows War

Needless to catalogue heroes. No man,
weighted with rifle, digging with nails in earth,
quickens at the name. Hero's a word for
peacetime. Battle
knows only three realities: enemy, rifle, life.

No man knows war or its meaning who has not
stumbled from tree to tree, desperate for cover,
or dug his face deep in earth, felt the ground pulse with
the ear-breaking fall of bombs. No man knows war
who never has crouched in his foxhole, hearing
the bullets an inch from his head, nor the zoom of
planes like a ferris wheel strafing the trenches. . . .

War is your comrade struck dead beside you,
his shared cigaret still alive in your lips.

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Not in the Cables

The Spanish Refugees Reach Mexico

THE ARRIVAL of the S.S. "Sinaia" at Vera Cruz on June 13, carrying 1,619 Spanish Republican refugees, began a planned migration which may have, on a smaller scale, social and cultural results such as followed the exodus of the highly civilized refugees from Constantinople who spread over the world the New Learning. Small groups of refugees had arrived earlier, but they were all "intellectuals" of international or at least Hispanic fame, and, as such, welcomed without question by the Mexican government. Of those on the "Sinaia," only about 200 were classified as "intellectuals," and many of them thus classified themselves on the grounds that they had held bureaucratic, propaganda or journalistic jobs during the civil war. The really important thing about the "Sinaia" expedition is that the majority of the refugees are skilled workers and farmers, hand-picked by Negrín's SERE (Evacuation Service for Spanish Republicans) and approved by the Mexican government's Minister to France.

The S.S. "Sinaia," a Fabre Line pilgrim boat of 8,000 tons with estimated space for 1,800 passengers, was chartered by the London National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief. The North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy subscribed $7,500, covering the transportation and equipment costs of 100 refugees. The Canadian Committee supplied $3,500.

The voyage was luckily dead calm. Accommodation was adequate, although certain defects—probably attributable to the Fabre Line's quaint idea that the refugees were a kind of savage beast—will have to be corrected. The shippers actually considered forbidding the passengers to use table knives till it was pointed out to them that it might possibly be safe to trust such persons as eighty-three-year-old Antonio Zozaya, dean of Spanish journalists, or Benjamin Jarnes, internationally known writer, with the means of eating their stew.

This point is worth stressing, for the campaign of slander begun by the French Rightist press is already being carried on by the Mexico City press and the Fascist groups close to the German Legation. It will undoubtedly be carried over into sections of the American press. At present, it is undirected. The Fascist groups—the so-called "Independent" parties who are going to oppose the Cardenistas in the coming presidential elections—met recently but could not decide whether to begin a campaign of outright terrorism or simply to organize a boycott of the refugees and deprive them of any chance of a livelihood in Mexico.

This attitude is certainly not shared by the majority of Mexicans. The reception at Vera Cruz was enthusiastic. In contrast to the grudging attitude of the authorities in other countries, a personal representative of the Interior in person met the ship, and even the tough Mexican customs officials showed most extraordinary courtesy, efficiency and cordiality.

The settlement problem is being handled by the Mexican Immigration Department under Francisco Trejo and the Technical Reception Committee of the SERE under Dr. Puche, with the Secretary of Finance and a representative of the CTM (Mexican Workers' Federation) serving on the board. Individuals as well as Mexican worker and peasant organizations are also contributing their best efforts. The Peasant Federation decided to take one family into every *ejido* (communal farm), estimating the total possible at 40,000. The CTM unions immediately made the immigrants members of the unions equivalent to those to which they had belonged in Spain. They have pledged themselves to find work for the refugees and, until it is found, guarantee them food, lodging and a minimum wage. Hundreds of delegates, and wires from all over Mexico, poured into the CTM headquarters and the improvised offices of the Department of the Interior at Vera Cruz asking for the privilege of entertaining Spanish refugees.

The "Sinaia" expedition is in the nature of an experiment. On the basis of what happens a general settlement scheme will be worked out. Francisco Trejo has already founded a Central Coördinating Committee which will centralize the work of the other relief organizations.

Commenting on the immigration, García Tellez, Secretary of the Interior, said that it could only be beneficial to Mexico and that Mexico would take an indefinite number, provided they were duly selected and provided for. In the selection, the only political criterion is the danger the refugees face if they should be forced back into Spain.

Although Mexico has vast "wide-open spaces," it will need capital to develop them. It is impossible simply to pioneer as in the old West of the Oregon Trail. The refugees are all desperately anxious to begin work tomorrow, but at present, owing to extremely low domestic purchasing power, work for all will be difficult to find. There is, however, on the part of both Mexicans and Spaniards the utmost good will. The conception of the *gachupin*—the exploiting Spanish intruder—has almost disappeared.

What is to happen to the superabundant "intellectuals"? The genuine artists, writers, scientists will find posts in universities and schools. The rest will have to be recategorized. But already Mexico City is becoming a new Hispanic intellectual center. If it could be possible to link such institutions as the Casa de España, founded on the initiative of President Cárdenas himself, with such institutions as the New York University in Exile, a new Athens could arise in the New World, eclectic, democratic and progressive.

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The Fifth American Youth Congress

THERE ARE more "youth" organizations than anyone can remember or keep straight. According to an arbitrary definition, there are approximately 20,000,000 "youths" (anyone between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four) in the United States. Roughly half this total belong to a club of one sort or another.

The American Youth Congress, which held its fifth annual convention in New York City over the July Fourth week-end, acts as the national clearing house for thousands of these national youth clubs. The 736 delegates who met in the old Manhattan Opera House (now redecorated and renamed the Manhattan Center) spoke for a total of 513 organizations with a membership of slightly less than 4,700,000.

One hundred and twelve student groups were represented—the American Student Union, the International Student Service, the National Student Federation, etc. Religious clubs had the second largest categorical representation. There were the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the National Council of Methodist Youth, Young Judea, the Young Presbyterians, the Polish Catholics, and on down the list—100 organizations in all. Trade unions of every sort and affiliation were represented, along with Young Republicans, Young Democrats, Young Communists and Young Socialists. There were spokesmen for peace clubs, liberal clubs, YMCA's, YMHA's, cultural groups, settlement houses and youth hostels. And there were young Coughlinites.

That is the idea of the Congress; any accredited delegate can come and vote, whatever his race, creed or political affiliation, so long as he is willing to abide by Robert's Rules of Order. They came from places ranging from Maine to Puerto Rico, and including twenty-three of the states.

Is there any point to such a meeting? New York is unbearably hot in July. Why should people of any age meet together for five days in stuffy conference rooms and smoke-filled auditoria when they could be out swimming or playing tennis? What good are their hopeful little resolutions? Do they know what they're talking about? And who cares?

Their opinions *are* important. Not only because the Congress delegates represent adults of tomorrow, but because right now they can translate their ideas into political reality. Of the 4,700,000 about 800,000 were old enough to vote in 1936. There will be eight million first voters in 1940. No wonder the national leadership of both the Democratic and Republican Parties keeps close track of the Congress's activities.

After listening to the debate for a few minutes you

about. An amazing amount of detailed knowledge is on tap. They are a special group; they are the leaders, chosen by local followings for their special abilities, to be sure. It would be malicious fun to run a "Professor Quiz" contest between these "kids" and the delegates to the convention of the National Association of Manufacturers.

The AYC does get things done, and its accomplishments would have been impossible without the national conventions where ideas are conceived and plans worked out. Establishment of the National Youth Administration and the general acceptance of the idea that the government should give financial help to students is an achievement of the Congress. It cannot take full credit, of course. But for five years the participating organizations have been patiently explaining the idea to people and lobbying for it in Washington. Take away the work they've done, and you can be sure that this year, when the "economizers" were closing down on almost everything, the NYA would not have been made a separate agency, with an appropriation increased to $100,000,000.

Right at the beginning of the Congress the communism issue was forced to the center of the stage by a small Coughlinite-inspired clique. The Congress leadership expected some such maneuver, from past experience, but none of the other attempts to break up the Congress had been so neatly planned and timed. The Coughlinites worked from a room in the Hotel New Yorker next door. Nine of them, along with seven allies (who may not have realized the sponsorship of the plot) formed an "anti-Red" bloc and demanded that denunciation of communism be included in the AYC creed and that all "Fascists, Communists and Nazis be expelled from the meeting." At the same time sixteen members of the New York City Council and the City Clerk, fifty-six state legislators and six private "citizens" made separate but curiously similar public statements. Each group demanded that the Congress declare itself opposed to "all isms, whether Communist, Fascist or Nazi."

I think the Congress leadership handled the problem well. They were not stampeded by the disruptive attack nor by the malicious Red-hunt in the press (The World-Telegram was just about as bad as The Journal-American). They defeated the anti-Communist amendment to the creed in orderly open meeting and the Coughlinites walked out, knowing they would capture the headlines by so doing. Then the next day the Congress passed a separate resolution condemning all dictatorships, whether they be Communist, Fascist or Nazi

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amendment. At the same time it resolved not to expel anyone from the meeting, however he might be labeled, and reaffirmed its faith in the principles of free speech and assembly. The vote was unanimous, with one abstention. Even the delegates of the Young Communist League went on record in favor of the anti-Communist statement, explaining as they did so that they felt there was no danger of dictatorship from communism.

It was purely a strategic move. The AYC is miles away from "Communist domination," whatever that overworked term may mean, but at the same time the majority of the delegates realize that the We-Oppose-All-Isms chant is the catchword, not of democrats, but of the native fascists. Nevertheless they agreed on the adoption of an anti-Communist resoultion in order to silence the objections of the disrupters.

The Red scare succeeded in wasting most of the Congress's time. It also scotched whatever publicity might have been given the main contribution of this year's meeting—the proposal for a federal Youth Loan Fund. The plan is still in embryo. Its details must be worked out by the new Congress cabinet. Roughly it proposes a $500,000,000 government appropriation to lend money, at low interest rates based on ability to pay, to young people in order to finish their educations (buy textbooks, pay tuitions, buy laboratory equipment), to purchase the tools of their trade, to buy land, seed, feed and equipment. The Youth Bank would advance money to young men and women to marry and to buy homes, and to get the medical care they need. It is a dramatic, specific idea, and its announcement at the Congress should have been headline copy. The Coughlinites must be happy to know that their activity managed to smother the principal idea of the meeting.

The delegates understand that a federal loan fund would constitute no solution, in the end, to their problems. A host of other resolutions were directed to what they feel is the long-run panacea—giving democracy a chance to work. The Youth Bank would be merely partial compensation for the economic troubles of young Americans in the "meantime."

I am impressed by the fact that every year the quality of youth meetings improves; the debate, the thinking and the management get better. Of course there are acres of room for improvement. Ideally every delegate to the AYC would be as wise in parliamentary ways and as clear in thought and speech as James Carey, the twenty-seven-year-old president of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, secretary of the CIO and chairman of the Congress Rules Committee. And instead of devoting so much time to discussion of general attitudes and policies, the perfect Congress would provide more room for the formulation of concrete lines of action.

This next year, for example, the big job to do is take an enormous amount of doing. Yet the Congress had almost no time to discuss the problem, to plan a campaign or to instruct the campaign leaders.

The Coughlinites were largely responsible for this difficulty, too. Still there is hardly any point in bemoaning the success of the disrupters. Their contribution had a certain positive after-affect—it showed the Congress who oppose democracy and how their opposition can be licked. BRUCE BLIVEN JR.

We'll All Feel Gay

Even along the railway platform it was spring
And my uncle was coming on the noon train, back from the war.
I was nine that month. I had a new cap and no coat.
We walked around, my grandfather and I, and watched the tracks.

The tracks slid shining and quiet with the warm sun
And the station stayed very still. Hunched on the baggage-wagon
The blue baggageman smoked his pipe, said, "How-do, Mr. Scott,"
And my grandfather said, "My son is getting back on this train";

And then it was coming. We stopped walking and listened, and then
The engine roared at the turn and raced at us and darkened
The whole station and shook it and I yelled, "There he is!"
He leaned on a cane and stood very big in his khaki.

So we all sort of shook hands and the other people
Laughed and waved as they went by, and my uncle said
"Well—how's the new bus?" as we climbed into the
1919 green Cadillac touring.

We drove past the ballfield and up Pelham Street,
And they talked about the car, and into Spring Street and Broadway,
And not about the hospital or the Argonne or France or
The Botches or anything like that; and my uncle

Looked at all the stores we went past—my grandfather's too
With the seed packages bright in the window, and outside
Gilt-and-green lawn-mowers in a row where the elm trees
Cast a thin shade leafing across the brick sidewalk.

We drove through Friendship to our street; my grandfather
Said the paint department yes should be moved, as they walked
Up the steps; but my uncle's cane crashed to the floor
And he was running all the way to the door where my grandmother stood.

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Shoot the Works

Fiction's Fixed Point

So sorry. It seems The Saturday Evening Post does not come out on Thursday. Naturally I apologize, but after all my chief point was that it does not appear on Saturday.

But for F.P.A. I might have lived and died and never known any better. Frank Adams has another cause in addition to his passion for visible house numbers. He thinks, indeed he declared in his column in The New York Post, that there is a kind of snobbishness by which the quality of The Saturday Evening Post is condemned by those who never read it. The demand that a certain amount of perusal should precede criticism will be accepted as axiomatic by any veteran book reviewer. And yet surely one should not be compelled to weigh each word in Mr. Stout's periodical before pronouncing judgment pro and con.

Nor can one make a good case for the literary excellence of any magazine by pointing out that on occasion it has contained pieces of merit. Belles-lettres, like big-league batting, must be judged by the averages. It does not seem to me that there are many three-hundred hitters in the field of popularly priced weeklies. It seems to me that fiction is the weakest feature.

Each weekly naturally attempts to keep up with the tides of current affairs as far as its articles are concerned. In this field one can hardly deny that both Collier's and The Saturday Evening Post are lively. But particularly in the case of the later I sometimes feel that I could stand for a shade more documentation. Certain exposés may be Krivitsky and then again they may be Shmelka. Maybe it is merely nostalgia on my part, but I think that in the days when Mark Sullivan edited a crusading Collier's and lent his fiery and progressive point of view to the efforts of all the magazine muckrakers, things were done much more thoroughly than at present. Samuel Hopkins Adams and Lincoln Steffens, and for that matter Ida Tarbell in her formative years, sat up day and night with a subject and knew it forwards and backwards before they put pen to paper. Certainly I can think of no recent series which got the heart of the subject as Miss Tarbell did in her stories about Standard Oil. Sam Adams was practically a research chemist in his own right when he was done with his discussion of patent medicines, and the standard of reporting which Steffens put into "The Shame of the Cities" has not been equaled during the life of the present generation.

Possibly the case against those who race with deadlines could be more properly briefed by some other fellow, but I maintain that the exigencies of time which make snap judgments sometimes inevitable in daily journalism should not obtain among the weeklies. I still maintain that the young man who did the Saturday Evening Post piece on James Roosevelt may have yielded too much to headline imagination when he undertook to set down what a man had said to himself fifteen years before the article was written.

It was not unknown in bygone days for magazines to [illegible] ported to have said, "This won't do you any good and it won't do us any good. Stick to your last." They turned against all things conservative that at times he may have been less than fair to the Republicans, which is, of course, a grievous error. But he has since made brave and gallant amends for past errors.

And if the GOP and all its works were slammed about on not a few occasions, things have since been evened up by the loyal attachment of The Saturday Evening Post to all things anti-New Deal. Indeed one may even be led to suspect that a good word for Roosevelt would scarcely be permitted to get into the magazine even though it occurred under the guise of fantasy or fiction.

It is in regard to fiction that my chief complaint lies against contemporary magazines. Possibly there is some adequate defense for the slapdash methods of modern articles and the fidelity to the slogan, "'Get the story and we will try to ascertain the facts a little later." The ghost of O. Henry and the trick ending clanks up and down the corridors of every publication which goes in for the form known as the short short. And even in the longer tales the editors seem to maintain that if no surprise hits the reader in the eye with the final paragraph the thing simply is not a magazine story.

Some of the novelists who are known as modern do get work into the publications which offer the fair rewards, but mostly it is not in their best manner. Indeed several have frankly admitted that they turn out magazine products merely to pay the rent while they work on more serious material in their off-moments. Of late there have been a number of novels dealing with such pertinent and timely themes as trade-unionism, sharecroppers, housing and the like. But stories built around such material very rarely find haven in the large and popular magazines. Boy meets girl just as he has been doing for the last fifty years and the fictional styles remain unchanged.

Although trivial in the extreme, any reader ought to admit the high degree of skill manifested by many of the popular-magazine authors. For instance I would like to be among the first to raise a cheer for the superb dialogue and easy humorous effects which P. G. Wodehouse gains in his stories of wise butlers and silly-ass young men. It is a rare gift and of course it has been developed to the full by the fact that Mr. Wodehouse has done it so often and in so nearly the same form. This is not to say that the agile author should be under a compulsion to take his next novel down in a coal mine. Still it would be an interesting experiment and I feel certain that The Saturday Evening Post would not like it.

Though the editors may demand a surprise in the final punch line of a piece of fiction, they certainly do not wish to be surprised by the mood or subject matter of any established author. And so the literary giants stand upon the shelves like tinned goods. One is tomato soup and always will be, while another is forever to be consumed as cream of asparagus. There must be no monkeying with the labels and, even in Philadelphia, Pepper Pot is missing.

The Saturday Evening Post discovered many years ago one of America's finest authors, and they published a lot of Ring Lardner, but when he suddenly turned in a tale more bitter than was his wont the great Lorimer is re-

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Washington Notes

Into the Trenches by Christmas

IF MR. ROOSEVELT persists in demanding the State Department-Bloom neutrality bill—which, as these Notes are written, he shows every sign of doing—he will probably obtain it, and obtain it much more easily than the congressional leaders now prophesy. I do not mean to suggest that there is likely to be a tumultuous, anti-neutrality uprising of the voters, with parades of the young men who may conceivably be called on to fight for Mr. Roosevelt's foreign policies, followed by platoons of the mothers and girl-friends who would knit socks for them. At least from this observation post, the voters appear anxious and confused, unsure whether the State Department bill is right or wrong.

Mr. Roosevelt's chance of a reasonably easy victory, in my opinion, rests largely on the weakness of the neutrality group in Congress. In the present juncture, at least, it needs a man with a size-sixteen collar and a size-fourteen shoe to beat Mr. Roosevelt, and among the neutrality group there appears to be no one that big. You need only name over its leaders. Perhaps foremost is Senator Nye, who a few years back slew the munitions makers with his bright, avenging sword, the same munitions makers whom Under-Secretary of War Johnson is now begging to accept "educational" government orders. Mr. Nye had a bold front, deep-set eyes, aggressive nose, jutting chin, and on the floor of the Senate, at least in every previous fight, has been as inept as a puppy, all curiosity, courage, paws and confusion. The two great remaining filibusters of our time, Senators Borah and Johnson, are old men. Although the Senate chamber and Washington apartment houses are now air-conditioned, the Washington river-heat bears heavily on them. Mr. Borah, moreover, professes to oppose filibusters on principle. Senator Wheeler has a superb gift for parliamentary in-fighting, but lately has been making beguiling gestures towards the New Dealers. This maneuver has caused so much jocoseness among fellow members of the Senate that, a few days ago, Mr. Wheeler felt impelled to deny he would run for Vice President in 1940 with Mr. Roosevelt. It is unlikely that he will be conspicuous in the neutrality fight. Senator La Follette, who is almost a congenital isolationist, is also in the midst of a trysting-match with the New Dealers, although, in his case, the ardor is chiefly on the New Dealers' side.

Our list of captains-of-filibuster thus narrows down to Senator Clark of Missouri and Senator Bone. Mr. Clark is a magician with parliamentary rules. To the titular Senate leader, Mr. Barkley, he has been the seven years' itch. From his father, old Champ Clark, he has taken a hatred of anything that smells even faintly of Wilsonian internationalism; his gifted wife is a deeply sincere pacifist. But repeatedly Mr. Clark has seemed on the edge of being a dominating senatorial personality, a national figure, a Democratic presidential possibility, and repeatedly nothing has come of it. Mr. Bone's ability and liberalism are generally recognized, but he has patiently carved an effigy of because almost everyone, reactionaries and New Dealers alike, is fond of his Washington colleague, Mr. Schwellenbach, and has been repelled by Mr. Bone's frequent quarrels with him.

Washington is stirred, in my opinion unjustifiably, by the parallel between the prospective neutrality fight and the League fight in 1919-20. Just as Mr. Wilson made his delirious Western tour to mobilize the voters against the Republican opposition to the Versailles Treaty, so Mr. Roosevelt threatens to roll westward to bespeak aid for England and France. Mr. Wilson returned from his journey politically humbled, physically broken. That memory haunts Washington politicians. It fills Mr. Roosevelt's enemies with glee, and makes even his close advisers jittery.

To me, however, the parallel seems far-fetched. Suppose we skip the important circumstance that, in 1919, a world war had ended, and voters everywhere felt a nausea towards all things foreign that, almost simultaneously, brought down Lloyd George and Clemenceau. Let us stick to matters of practical politics. In 1919, the Republican opposition in Congress had chosen the Versailles Treaty as an instrument with which to ruin Mr. Wilson. Today within the reactionary Democratic-Republican coalition—there is no similar unity within the Republican Party—or on the neutrality issue. More important, the neutrality group has no one to repeat Mr. Borah's stump-speaking exploits of 1919. White-bearded elders will recall that Mr. Wilson, contrary to tradition, met with immense, cheering crowds on his Western trip. But hot behind him followed Mr. Borah and a squad of Republican colleagues. Almost visibly, sentiment shifted in city after city. There is no one in Congress now who could follow Mr. Roosevelt and repeat Mr. Borah's feat, unequaled in our political history.

Anti-labor witnesses appearing in favor of Senator Burke's amendments to the Wagner Act have had a most unhappy time, although you would not receive this impression from most newspaper reports. Senator Ellender, member of Huey Long's old Louisiana political machine, has established himself as a successor to Mr. Justice Black, a ruthless cross-examiner and defender of labor unionism. One of Mr. Burke's witnesses, for example, was Mr. Cronin, a secretary of the Automobile Manufacturers' Association. Before the Senate Labor Committee, he professed only the vaguest knowledge of labor espionage. From an encyclopedic knowledge of the testimony taken by the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, Mr. Ellender skillfully led Mr. Cronin to tell that he had earlier been employed by the National Metal Trades Association and had supervised labor espionage for one of its member companies. One of the spies whose reports passed through Mr. Cronin's hands had had himself made president of an AFL union. Two spokesmen appeared for the National Association of Manufacturers, Mr. John Call, general counsel, and Mr. Hook, chairman. After observing Mr. Ellender in action, Mr. Hook asked to postpone his testimony, and has not reappeared. The American Iron and Steel Institute sent Mr. Walter S. Tower, its secretary, to speak before the committee. He was taken in hand by Senator La Follette, who held his testimony strictly to expenditures for tear gas made by constituent companies of his association.

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Other People's Money

Devaluation v. Stabilization

THE ACTION of the Senate in voting an end of the President's power to devalue the dollar, as usual got itself all mixed up with spurious issues. Some originated with the President's enemies; others with the President.

The President's critics cluttered the issue with political issues. The President said it was an attempt to turn the power over the dollar back to Wall Street and to weaken the defense of the country. Liberals, who as a rule do not have too much familiarity with finance, and international finance above all, rallied to the President's side to defend another attack upon the cause of liberalism.

The truth of the matter was and is that the devaluation and stabilization powers have nothing to do with politics and have not been so used. Also, ending the control of the President was not turning the control over the dollar back to Wall Street, since Wall Street never had the power to devalue or to regulate the dollar in international trade. The President must have known this. As to weakening the defense of the country, that, of course, was one of those demagogic appeals which politicians sometimes resort to in moments of excitement or anger.

But these things are understandable. This is the way the mind of the politician works. What is less excusable is the attitude of the liberal. The question of devaluing the dollar and of stabilizing it has nothing whatever to do with liberalism or conservatism. It is a purely technical device which either a liberal or a conservative may use or forbear to use in accordance with the best interests of trade and good housekeeping. As a matter of fact, there was only one question remotely touching liberalism involved and that was the question of where the power to devalue should be lodged. The normal liberal position on this would be against committing the power to juggle the currency to the executive, not because the executive is a bad man, but because this is too important a power to be entrusted to any executive and because having been given to one good executive for a good purpose it can be the more easily given to a bad one for a bad purpose. The liberals, however, flew to the defense of the President in his more or less reactionary position merely because he has become for them the symbol of liberalism and remains so no matter what he does.

The important thing to remember about all this is that the question of devaluation and that of stabilization are two different questions. It is possible to have a stabilization policy and fund without presidential devaluation powers. It is also posible to give the President devaluation powers without a stabilization function. The Senate would have proceeded more wisely had it proceeded more deliberately. It should have revoked the devaluation powers and left the stabilization powers untouched. Few things can upset international commerce more quickly and seriously than instability in exchange. The stabilization of exchange in a time when there are so many disturbing influences is a desirable thing.

It would have been far better, therefore, if the stabilization policy had been preserved in that first attack. It would have been far better all around. Because abolishing the stabilization policy did not abolish the fund, which consists of nearly two billion dollars. This is the gold profit from the first devaluation. And that gold profit would have tumbled automatically back into the Treasury's general fund. Once there, there is not the slightest doubt that it would become immediately the goal of the inflationists who wish to spend it. It must not be forgotten that the Republican members of the House Ways and Means Committee last year issued a statement favoring spending the gold profit.

When the President devalued the dollar, he made no claim that it was at the mercy of Wall Street and that he planned to rescue it. On the contrary he said that it was at the mercy of forces far from Wall Street. "It is at the mercy," he said "all too greatly of the accidents of international trade, the internal policies of other nations and of political disturbances in other countries." He said he planned the devaluation in order to raise prices. He also said it was a step toward a managed currency. It was therefore just a handful of political dust which he threw in the eyes of the people when he said the Senate had restored control over the dollar to Wall Street.

However, what was more important was his statement that the taking away of his powers would weaken our national defense. That was a serious statement. The power over the content of the dollar, given first as a step toward a managed currency, was now to be used as a part of our national defense. No one need be in any doubt as to what the President meant by that. He has said he proposed to use every power short of war to aid Britain and France in the event they go to war with Germany and Italy. He intends to play an active part in that war, short of using troops. No human being doubts for one moment that if he does this we shall not stop short of war but shall actually go to war. The President does not want to get us into war. He thinks he can prevent a European war by convincing Germany that if she goes to war with England and France, she will also have to deal with us. But necessarily contained in this is the inescapable fact that if Germany does go to war with France and England we are sure to be brought in because we propose to take part in the war, first by economic weapons and later with arms.

Now one of the weapons the President wants is financial freedom. For this he wants the power to use a half-billion-dollar fund for making loans abroad. Also he wants the power to collaborate with England and France on international exchange.

This simplifies the question. If you believe the President ought to be supplied with all these various weapons to fight on the international field and that he should be free to use them to help either side, then continuing the devaluation powers will seem proper to you. But if you think this President—indeed any President—should not be permitted to mix up in these quarrels, then you will not want him to have this additional weapon.

However, the political issue settled it—pork. Enough silver Senators were for the ending of the power in exchange for a boost in the silver price. When they got that

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Movies: One Here, One There

THE SPECIAL STYLE of comedy in "Bachelor Mother" is not easy to mark off. Its formula is worn enough—rich-man-poor-girl, etcetera—but perhaps what distinguishes it is a certain appealing belief in its own simplicities, a keeping of faith with its people, making their troubles felt as troubles and never letting them down into meanness or absurdity just for a laugh. The laughs are there all right, and so is sentiment; but there is maintained an almost colloidal balance between decent feeling and the tough ready wit of people who know their way around.

The story just shows what can happen if you can't prove it isn't your baby even though you are Ginger Rogers, and if a store like Altman's had David Niven for the son of the firm, and Christian responsibility as its moving ideal. (All together now, girls from Notions, Handbags, Hose: *Yah!*) As for the details of it, we can leave them to the picture, where they belong.

Garson Kanin made the film for RKO, and the way he can fill out a sequence with visual comedy is something to put in your notebook. There are so many neat lines and ideas that a lot of credit goes to the writing; but no line is ever good until it is planted. I think the whole Cinderella-at-the-ball sequence is a piece of genius, from the entrance all through the play of dancing and dinners and pidgin-Swedish to the hilarious breakdown exit. And for instruction, you wouldn't do badly to analyze the timing and motion of the scene where father and son come together at lunch, both red in the face and horribly short-circuited by the busy servant. It is a rare trick to be able to set cameras so that people will see what you wish them to see without being slapped across the eye with it.

The landlady is too good to be true; the shopgirl never comes home to soak her feet after standing all day on them in a street-floor Christmas rush; and no one ever saw a baby so dry from head to foot. These aren't complaints in the name of realism, because the picture already is real. But there is still room in the magic of pictures for more of life than we see lived there, and it is up to the people who make good pictures to exploit such a rich human vein.

Hollywood has become very adept in getting around the charted obstacles in the way of a straight story. However prettified, I can forgive this picture's lapses in department-store biography for its neat comment on such types as floor-walkers, and for the explosive sequence where Niven in disguise tries to exchange something in his own store (the girls have a word for "exchange" and the word, pronounced behind the hand, is Hoh-hoh). And while everybody's moral waterline is actually above reproach, they certainly had Joe Breen looking at the little birdie when they took this one: Ginger Rogers is not an unmarried mother, but is accepted as such in the picture's best circles.

The characters are squarely written into the story and are there only for their use to it. But there are so many slips between script and lip movement on the screen that any director is lucky to have such a thorough troupe. Ginger Rogers is certainly one of the most talented and still human lovelies that have come down the road, ease without of understanding that carries her over tough places she could have had no formal training for. David Niven is another of my favorites, a quiet mild chap, sharp as a razor. Add Frank Albertson, who for several years now has been the ideal post-adolescent American with all the answers. And Charles Coburn is a wise and veteran actor for any situation, with a subtlety that triumphs over typing. There is besides a feeling you get from a movie only occasionally, that the company had a good time making it together, that it was one of those happy things from start to finish. Maybe it wasn't that way on the lot, but that is the way it is on the screen when you see it—and that's what you're there for.

The Fifth Avenue Playhouse is making a nice summer business out of its second "international festival" of movies, and though the fifty-three films have to be selected more by audience appeal, availability and print condition than by actual merit, it gives you a fine chance to enlarge or revise your film perspective (you will get little perspective on American films, but what have you been living here all your life for?). The best service the Playhouse has done this year is in dragging out G. W. Pabst's "Kameradschaft" again. I have worked out three loose categories for old movies as seen today: (1) historically important; (2) originally important as snob appeal; (3) enduring merit. "Kameradschaft" belongs squarely in the third group—along with Milestone's "All Quiet," it is among the few early sound films that still travel on their own power.

Its theme is that men do not know they are brothers until there is some kind of disaster or war. Its subject is an actual incident in the mines along the Franco-German frontier, when fire and water and terrific weight of earth broke through onto the entire French day shift, and the German miners coming off forgot the stored hostilities and suspicions of life in boundary towns, and went lolloping over temporal barriers and down the endless black shaft to stand shoulder to shoulder against the only true enemy of men anywhere—outside of themselves, that is. There are few things that time and circumstance have made more poignant than the end of this story, worked out at the time with such truth and faith in a country where today the real truth of life and faith in people are twisted or made a mock of. They are the same good people and hearts of oak beneath, still capable of heroism and universal friendship, but stirred to one thing or another because while they work with their hands and feel with their hearts, their heads are an open bowl of chowder.

About the picture itself: Pabst got a wonderful impression of living people. Despite occasional superimposed love and interest angles and a certain inevitable muddiness in translation, his choice of types and latitude in giving them free play keep the movie away from the pitfall of the impersonal diagram. The fire and cave-ins are unbelievably vivid for the resources of eight to ten years ago, but even they would be little more than meaningless spectacularism if the men down there were not true theatre properties, their lunch period or changing of clothes or cabaret of an evening as carefully devised as an explosion. And so the dark mine corridors, the poor spot of light thrown across them by the single lamp of the man stumbling there, the rising

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lungs in the air-cooled audience because of a human meaning that has been put into the film. Even today, with today's patronizing attitude toward the first fits and starts of yesterday, it is impossible to see without feeling. "Kameradschaft" is a film like the Pudovkin films, rising above time or language to hold any audience by its command of theatre illusion.

OTIS FERGUSON

The Bandwagon

That vast collection of books, objects of art and antiques went under the auctioneer's hammer at the Van Sweringen home, Daisy Hill Estate, just out of Cleveland. These two business giants used the same care in selecting their books as they gave to the building of their business empire.– *News item in the Hotel Trade Magazine.*

House Bill 445, "to prohibit the display of any motion picture if any member of the cast has been divorced two or more times." – *The title of a bill proposed in the Illinois State Legislature.*

There are people who have a lust for GOULASH and WHIPPED CREAM so that they can glut themselves.

To every hysterical shouter and belly stuffer who wants to have new delicacies, we say THIS IS NOT THE RIGHT TIME.

Co-Nationalists, it is your duty to teach these ridiculous contemporaries a lesson so that they finally will comprehend what they are here for! – *From a Nazi leaflet distributed in Vienna.*

Virginia, There She Stands

Not over 10 percent of our adult population had votes when George Washington was elected. That is why they elected him. Had 100 percent had the right to vote George Washington would not have carried a precinct. . . . Virginia is the only state he would certainly carry today. – *Thomas Lomax Hunter in The Richmond Times-Dispatch.*

Shall the Government Take Over Radio?

San Francisco.–Fan dance performed by a trained flea named Sally, costumed and with a microscopic fan attached to her back, was aired recently by KSFO. . . . A special pick-up was devised so that listeners could hear the flea as she polka'd and three-stepped on top of her music box, with Baldwin [the announcer] providing a hop-by-hop description. – *From the radio-gossip column in Variety.*

Who Washes the Dishes?

Mr. Pinkerton was not really surprised, because he knew from the cinema and the picture papers that all Americans are divorced, not only once but many times, and that whole American states are set aside where divorce is all they do. – *From David Frome's story, "Visitor in the Night," in The American Magazine.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Band-

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A Communication

The Death of José Robles

SIR: I did not intend to publish any account of the death of my old friend José Robles Pazos (the fact that he had once translated a book of mine, and well, was merely incidental; we had been friends since my first trip to Spain in 1916) until I had collected more information and possible documentary evidence from survivors of the Spanish civil war, but the reference to him in Mr. Malcolm Cowley's review of my last book [The New Republic, June 14] makes it necessary for me to request you to print the following as yet incomplete outline of the events that led up to his death. As I do not possess the grounds of certitude of your reviewer and his informants, I can only offer my facts tentatively and say that to the best of my belief they are accurate.

José Robles was a member of a family of monarchical and generally reactionary sympathies in politics; his brother was an army officer in the entourage of Alfonso of Bourbon when he was king; one of the reasons why he preferred to live in America (he taught Spanish Literature at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore) was his disagreement on social and political questions with his family. He was in Spain on his vacation when Franco's revolt broke out, and stayed there, although he had ample opportunity to leave, because he felt it his duty to work for the Republican cause. As he knew some Russian he was given a job in the Ministry of War and soon found himself in close contact with the Russian advisers and experts who arrived at the same time as the first shipment of munitions. He became a figure of some importance, ranked as lieutenant-colonel, although he refused to wear a uniform, saying that he was a mere civilian. In the fall of 1936 friends warned him that he had made powerful enemies and had better leave the country. He decided to stay. He was arrested soon after in Valencia and held by the extra-legal police under conditions of great secrecy and executed in February or March, 1937.

It must have been about the time of his death that I arrived in Spain to do some work in connection with the film "The Spanish Earth," in which we were trying to tell the story of the civil war. His wife, whom I saw in Valencia, asked me to make inquiries to relieve her terrible uncertainty. Her idea was that as I was known to have gone to some trouble to get the cause of the Spanish Republic fairly presented in the United States, government officials would tell me frankly why Robles was being held and what the charges were against him. It might have been the same day that Liston Oak, a one-time member of the American Communist Party who held a job with the propaganda department in Valencia, broke the news to José Robles' son, Francisco Robles Villegas, a seventeen-year-old boy working as a translator in the censorship office, that his father was dead. At the same time officials were telling me that the charges against José Robles were not serious and that he was in no danger. Mr. Del Vayo, then Foreign Minister, professed ignorance and chagrin when I talked to him about

that if Robles were dead he had been kidnaped and shot by anarchist "uncontrollables." They gave the same impression to members of the United States embassy staff who inquired about his fate.

It was not until I reached Madrid that I got definite information, from the then chief of the republican counter-espionage service, that Robles had been executed by a "special section" (which I gathered was under control of the Communist Party). He added that in his opinion the execution had been a mistake and that it was too bad. Spaniards I talked to closer to the Communist Party took the attitude that Robles had been shot as an example to other officials because he had been overheard indiscreetly discussing military plans in a café. The "fascist-spy" theory seems to be the fabrication of romantic American Communist sympathizers. I certainly did not hear it from any Spaniard.

Anybody who knew Spaniards of any stripe before the civil war will remember that they tended to carry personal independence in talk and manners to the extreme. It is only too likely that Robles, like many others who were conscious of their own sincerity of purpose, laid himself open to a frame-up. For one thing, he had several interviews with his brother, who was held prisoner in Madrid, to try to induce him to join the Loyalist army. My impression is that the frame-up in his case was pushed to the point of execution because Russian secret agents felt that Robles knew too much about the relations between the Spanish war ministry and the Kremlin and was not, from their very special point of view, politically reliable. As always in such cases, personal enmities and social feuds probably contributed.

On my way back through Valencia, as his wife was penniless, I tried to get documentary evidence of his death from Republican officials so that she could collect his American life insurance. In spite of Mr. Del Vayo's repeated assurances that he would have a death certificate sent her, it never appeared. Nor was it possible to get hold of any record of the indictment or trial before the "special section."

As the insurance has not yet been paid I am sure that Mr. Cowley will understand that any evidence he may have in his possession as to how José Robles met his death will be of great use to his wife and daughter, and I hope he will be good enough to communicate it to me. His son was captured fighting in the Republican militia in the last months of the war and, as there has been no news of him for some time, we are very much afraid that he died or was killed in one of Franco's concentration camps.

Of course this is only one story among thousands in the vast butchery that was the Spanish civil war, but it gives us a glimpse into the bloody tangle of ruined lives that underlay the hurray-for-our-side aspects. Understanding the personal histories of a few of the men, women and children really involved would, I think, free our minds somewhat from the black-is-black and white-is-white obsessions of partisanship.

Provincetown, Mass. JOHN DOS PASSOS

[*Another comment on this case, made independently by Mrs. Hans Amlie, appears below. We hope to publish additional comment by persons with first-hand information at a subsequent date.* — THE EDITORS]

Correspondence

More About José Robles

SIR: I am writing to you about Mr. Cowley's review of John Dos Passos' "Adventures of a Young Man" [The New Republic, June 14]. I refer to the lines "Dos Passos' Spanish translator, a young man. . . ."

In Valencia in the Press office, there worked with me for the year (1937) I was there, one Francisco (Coco) Robles, aged sixteen, born in Spain but educated in the United States at Baltimore, Maryland. He was the son of one Colonel Robles, for some eighteen years a professor of Romance languages at Johns Hopkins University. The Robles family consisted of mother, daughter (born in the United States and with an American passport), son (Francisco) and the Professor.

Each year for the long summer holiday, the family returned to Spain. They were there, naturally, in the summer of 1936 and the Professor promptly joined the Loyalist forces with the rank of Colonel. His son, Francisco, who had studied Russian in the United States, in addition to his high-school studies, was appointed translator and guide for the first Soviet aviators, tankists, etc., who came to Spain. (He came to work in the Press office in January of 1937 when I went to work there.)

(All of the life of Francisco, so he told me, Dos Passos had been an intimate, warm friend of the Robles family. The elder Robles had once lived with Dos Passos, etc.)

All right. So Colonel Robles, although educating his children and Syndicalists throughout the war were less vigilant in accepting members than any other organization, and that their ranks

calists, and the way that they were acting in the Spanish struggle.

Colonel Robles was suddenly arrested, either in December, 1936, or January, 1937, given a courtmartial and executed. The very day that Dos Passos walked into the Press office at Valencia, March, 1937, and Francisco (Coco) ran to greet him, was just about twenty-four hours after the Robles family had been informed that the Colonel had been executed.

Dos Passos raced around frantically for several days in March, 1937, attempting to establish the innocence of the dead Colonel Robles. Naturally, there being a war going on, he was not able to find out very much. The American consul at Valencia, with Captain Griffis, the air attaché, had informed the Loyalist government of the interest of the United States Government in the case of Robles, in behalf of Robles' young daughter, an American citizen, aged fourteen at the time. The consul was promised a transcript of the courtmartial proceedings, which he had not received some six months after the execution.

Dos Passos, as I have said, unable to get "satisfaction" anywhere, dashed out of Spain, his companion on the trip being Liston Oak, who had previously been the editor of the Press Bulletin. Oak was "unhappy," as he put it, about Spain.

The family of Robles believed that Robles had been "framed" by the Anarchists—it being a known fact that he had opposed them openly. It is necessary to remember that the Anarchists

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On my own behalf, I can tell you that young Francisco, the son of the executed Colonel, continued working in the Press office until well into last year (1938) and that he then entered the Loyalist army; his little sister was sent to the United States last year by the Loyalist government as a delegate to the Youth Congress.

MILLY BENNETT
Mill Valley, Calif. (Mrs. Hans Amlie)

Billets for Bullets

SIR: I enclose a letter to Heywood Broun, written in answer to his advertisement for "south-paw writers and hard-hitting essayists" in The Connecticut Nutmeg. I sent him the letter there but he hasn't printed it.

[ENCLOSURE]

Dear Broun:

You want hard-hitting essayists, do you? All right get out there and wind up, one of your neighbors is coming to bat and the name isn't Casey.

What a lot of us are scared of is that maybe your name is Casey. God save the Irish! I agree with that, but you know the one I mean, the mighty slugger who took one cut too many and went to the showers just another bush leaguer (Little Rock if you like) who didn't deliver. It only takes one to hit it. Sure, but it only takes one to *not* hit it, and that can spell tragedy.

Let's torture this metaphor, do you mind? There was a big fat guy named Casey Broun, and a lot of us read the box score every morning just to see how many hits he'd made in how many times at bat, and how many assists. And the errors (we looked for them too) weren't many, day by day. He was our Big League hero, for the very good reason that he was always on our side. If Franco's Black Sox were playing the Loyalists in the International League, for instance, we knew which uniform we'd find Casey Broun wearing when he came out of the dugout swinging his four bats.

Your Loyalists, in spite of all the pressure we applied from the bleachers and all the pop bottles we tossed onto the field and all our best efforts to kill that umpire with the umbrella, got licked. You went down swinging, as always, and we didn't say a word (there was no word to say when Spain died on third) but that game is one none of us will ever forget who saw it because we all left something of ourselves on the field among the pop bottles and the torn score cards.

We didn't say a word, Casey Broun, because you had hit every time until that last time, and after all, it was getting dark out there, and maybe you couldn't tell you were getting the spitball. And maybe you couldn't even see who it was Franco'd called from the bullpen when the shadows were falling. I'll tell you then. His name was Vatican. So it seems funny to see you playing together now on the same team. I thought I ought to tell you.

New Canaan, Conn. JOHN S. RODELL

SIR: What's this I hear of Heywood Broun's joining the Catholic Church? Don't like it a bit and didn't like his review of "Grapes of Wrath" either. *Have been* enjoying his articles.

Austin, Texas VALESKA DAVIS

SIR: Undoubtedly Mr. Broun's recent conversion had something to do with his criticism of Mr. Steinbeck's book. He seemed strangely hurt—in a subsequent column—that he in turn should be criticized. Now he can have the consolation of the Catholic Book List for his reading, and if he finds that a little dull, he can reach out and tune in Father Coughlin, who isn't dull,

SIR: I recently read in the news that Heywood Broun, whose column "Shoot the Works" I have closely followed during the past three years, has become a member of the Catholic Church. While I believe that a person's religious beliefs are a private matter, I believe, too, that a public figure like Broun, who is regarded as an outstanding liberal and trade-unionist, owes some explanation to all of us who respect him for his progressive views. The meaning of this action can only be interpreted as full agreement with the notoriously anti-trade-union, reactionary, pro-fascist role of the Church hierarchy.

Pasadena, Calif. MARTIN SUMMERFIELD

SIR: If it is true that Mr. Broun has affiliated with the Catholic Church, Mr. Broun has a great many readers who would be interested in an explanation of his reasons for this step.

Oakland, Calif. MARK STONE

SIR: How come that the boys who have piled upon Broun for his objection to Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath" are not mindful that Heywood is now a member of the "Holy Name Society" along with Fulton Sheen, Charlie Coughlin, Father Curran of Brooklyn and "Gangplank Charlie" O'Connell of Boston?

Rochester, N. Y. J. L. BREWER

"Who Lied About Spain?"

SIR: Heartfelt thanks for the article "Who Lied About Spain?" by James Benét and Bruce Bliven Jr., in your issue of June 28!

It is hard to be on the losing side. But Lord! it does give one deep inner satisfaction to have events prove one's contentions up to the hilt. Those who spoke, and wrote, and labored for Loyalist Spain have a clear conscience and should have grateful hearts. And the next time their voices will be firmer and their steps surer.

HERMAN F. REISSIG
Executive Secretary, Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy

New York City

From The New Republic Mail Bag

John T. Flynn's article, "Kings Across the Water" (June 28), elicited a barrage of letters. Robert G. Davies of Santa Monica, California, seemed to like it. Philip B. Wells of Plainfield, New Jersey, was offended and promises not to renew his subscription next year. And Theodore Mahaffey of El Centro, California, thought the Flynn article the best thing written about the royal visit.

Milton K. Abelson of New Haven, Connecticut, writing about the controversy over the Committee for Cultural Freedom, says: "The New Republic is right in striving for unity among all progressive forces. . . . Bemuddled liberals who seek to disrupt and sabotage a united attack upon fascism are themselves furthering this terror." . . . And much the same point is made by Barnard Herman of Brooklyn, New York: "In no sense a Stalinist myself, I am wholeheartedly for the good sense you . . . express. It isn't necessary to attack Stalinism in order to defend American liberalism."

Vincent McHugh of Lindenhurst, New York, comments on our symposium "America and the Next War." "No one remembered that it is the right and business of every citizen in a democracy to lay down his own and his country's course by a plain act of choice. I mean the action provided for by the Ludlow referendum." . . . Meyer Kurz of New York City didn't like the edition of July 5 which contained, among others, the article by W. Jett Lauck, "A Program for America."

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Books in Review

Thomas Wolfe's Legacy

WHEN THOMAS WOLFE died last year at the age of thirty-eight, he left no completed but still unpublished novel behind him. What he did leave was an enormous puzzle in the shape of a manuscript containing more than a million words, the length of a dozen ordinary novels.

Embedded in the manuscript were chapters or incidents from at least five of the novels that Wolfe had planned to write, and probably from several others as well. One of these books, dealing with his great unhappy love affair, was present in an almost complete draft, with many revisions. A second book concerned his relations with a publisher and a third described his trip across the country; these also were nearly finished. The remaining books were more fragmentary, though together they told a fairly connected story —Wolfe's own story, the subject of almost everything he had ever written. He sometimes thought of throwing all the books together into a single novel that would have been longer when completed than "Remembrance of Things Past"; he had made some of the revisions that would have been necessary. Still, as a result of his changing plans—or rather of his utter inability to follow a consistent plan—the manuscript was as wildly confused as his life had been.

This was the problem he bequeathed to his publishers and his literary executor. After much hesitation they solved it in a fashion that I think was mistaken. They decided to publish almost the whole manuscript, divided into two very long novels. It is the first of these, "The Web and the Rock,"[1] that has just appeared.

Judged as a piece of editing, it is able and conscientious. Judged as a new book by Thomas Wolfe, it is decidedly less successful. That is a fact one would hardly suspect from reading most of the reviews it has so far received. The critics have apparently been swayed by their warm personal regard for the author, which everybody shared, and by their hope that his astounding promise would somehow be fulfilled in spite of death. But the truth ought to be told, even in a review that reads like a letter of condolence. And the truth is that "The Web and the Rock" is by far the weakest of Wolfe's novels—is indeed so weak that there is a justified question whether most of it should have been published at all.

One of its obvious faults is that it breaks apart into two uneven sections. The first of these tells how Monk Webber grew up in the little city of Libya Hill in the state of Old Catawba—that is, in Buncombe County, North Carolina, where Wolfe himself was born and reared. He spends four years at Pine Rock College—that is, Wolfe's own University of North Carolina—then comes to New York in search of fame and a mistress. I understand that part of this section was written shortly before Wolfe died. Other parts of it are what he was able to salvage from the unpublished first draft of "Look Homeward, Angel" and from an abandoned novel about his mother's kinsfolk that he intended to call "The Hills Beyond Pentland." The episodes from these various sources are loosely tied together. Some of them have a powerful organic life that is lacking in the section as a whole.

The second section, beginning on page 295, is much more unified. It tells how the hero, coming home from Europe—but how did he get there?—falls in love with a Jewish theatrical designer named Esther Jack, a candid and charming woman much older than himself. He is mothered by her for three years, grows plump on her delectable cooking, meets and dislikes her literary friends, finishes a book that she inspired him to write, fails to get it published, then quarrels with her unjustly and—the word is not too strong—insanely for page after page and chapter after chapter. Most of this section seems to consist of a novel that Wolfe had written in 1936, though at least one of the original episodes has disappeared, leaving a gap in the story, and new material must have been added in 1938. It is connected with the first section only by the name of the hero. One could hardly say that it is connected by his personality, since Monk Webber has changed almost beyond recognition.

In the title of the book as published, the Rock is Manhattan Island. The Web is the subtle and unnatural world of the Jewish intelligentsia, in which the hero threatens to get involved through his love for Esther. Finally he escapes to Munich, where he starts a drunken brawl, gets a broken head that he fully earned, and finds spiritual rebirth in a hospital.

The novel as a whole contains many fine passages—for example, the stories of Baxter Lampley, the butcher's son; of Jim Randolph, the football hero who never got over it; of Dick Prosser, the pious Negro who ran amok. The chapter on Seumas Malone, the Irish critic, is a fairly effective piece of satire, especially to those who recognize Seumas Malone. The character of Esther Jack is one of the most careful and sympathetic full-length portraits that Wolfe has drawn; it is a tribute to his honesty as a novelist that he makes one sympathize with Esther instead of the hero in all their quarrels. But the book is everywhere marred by bathos, bombast, painful repetitions, middle-class prejudice and naïve but offensive anti-Semitism. Whole chapters, like those on the hero's daydreams ("Alone") and on Horace Liveright's publishing house ("The Philanthropists") are so gawkily written that it is a physical discomfort to read them. Wolfe's novels have always presented this mixture of the nearly sublime and the silly. In this new book, however, the best passages are less nearly sublime than the best in "Look Homeward, Angel" and "Of Time and the River." The worst are sillier than anything he published during his lifetime; indeed, they are almost without a parallel in serious literature.

Here are a few examples of bad writing, chosen not at all as the most flagrant but merely as the shortest:

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fair, fresh, fragrant, lazy, furnacelike day of sweltering heat across the body, bones, sinews, tissues, juices, rivers, mountains, plains, streams, lakes, coastal regions and compacted corporosity of the American continent, a train might have been observed by one of the lone watchers of the Jersey Flats approaching that enfabled rock, that ship of life, that swarming, million-footed, tower-masted and sky-soaring citadel that bears the magic name of the Island of Manhattan, at terrific speed.

. . . the heights of Jersey City, raised proudly against the desolation of these lonely marshes as a token of man's fortitude, a symbol of his power, a sign of his indomitable spirit that flames forever like a great torch in the wilderness, that lifts against the darkness and the desolation of blind nature the story of its progress—the heights of Jersey, lighted for an eternal feast.

So all were gone at last, one by one, each swept out into the mighty flood tide of the city's life, there to prove, to test, to find, to lose himself, as each man must—alone.

But, of such was youth. And he was young.

The sight of her face, earnestly bent and focused in its work of love, her sure and subtle movements and her full, lovely figure—all that was at once both delicate and abundant in her, together with the maddening fragrance of glorious food, evoked an emotion of wild tenderness and hunger in him which was unutterable.

In most of these passages the fault is an undisciplined and undirected energy that leads him to write about a train ride across the Jersey marshes as if it were the charge of the Lost Brigade, and about Jersey City as if it were Periclean Athens. The last passage presents a different and more illuminating problem. It would be easy to defend if Wolfe really meant it to be funny, for in that case the worst charge against it would be that he used exactly the same language for burlesque humor that he used for his serious writing and therefore left the reader uncertain of the effect he was trying to achieve. But the context seems to show that Wolfe was as serious here as elsewhere; that in fact he regarded his wild tenderness and his hunger for glorious food as being of equal value; both were "unutterable" and therefore holy. In certain African tribes, even the fingernail parings of the king-god are sacred; and Wolfe had almost the same attitude toward his own least and tritest emotions. A train ride across the Jersey marshes really was the charge of the Lost Brigade, because Wolfe was taking it.

By now it ought to be obvious that the source of his weakness, and of his abounding energy as well, was his inordinate preoccupation with himself. He was not conceited in any familiar sense of the word; indeed he was realistic and humble about his own failings. On the other hand, he regarded his life as something more than that of an ordinary mortal; it was a sacrament, a miracle, a legend of man's eternal aspirations. All his thoughts and deeds were bathed in a supernatural light that was also reflected on the people around him. When he wrote about these people, he usually wrote well—unless he hated them—and sometimes he wrote superbly. He had a thirst for knowledge about their lives, a warm sympathy, a gift for seeing, "beneath their bright, unnatural masks, something that was naked and lonely." But when he wrote about intended his new book to be "a genuine spiritual and artistic change . . . the most objective novel I have written." But the attempt was doomed to failure by his whole personality. He liked to keep people at a distance and wrote about them most confidently when he was looking at them from a train window. When a character became too interesting and threatened to distract attention from the autobiographical hero, Wolfe dropped him instantly. It was the same impulse, I think, that made him quarrel with some of his oldest friends when they threatened to become an essential part of his life. Instinctively he was driven back on himself, driven back to writing books about himself, until his apparently endless resources were in fact nearly exhausted.

Though his editors have worked with care and even piety, I am not sure that in publishing the present version of "The Web and the Rock" they have done their best for his posthumous career. They have accepted the author's valuation of himself and his mania for bigness, whereas he was actually at his best in episodes and novellas. They have been tolerant of his faults, remembering how he used to howl with pain and exasperation when one of his weaker passages was omitted. This time they have included whole chapters that should have been decently forgotten. Had they been more ruthless toward the manuscript, they would have been a great deal kinder toward its author and its readers.

MALCOLM COWLEY

Adventures in Optimism

Security: Can We Retrieve It? by Sir Arthur Salter. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 396 pages. $3.50.

NEARLY TWENTY YEARS AGO, in reviewing a volume with the optimistically naïve title, "The New World Order," I quoted the remark made by Cardinal Fleury after he had examined the Abbé de St. Pierre's "Projét de Paix Perpétuelle." The Cardinal said to the Abbé: "Admirable, save for one omission: I find no provision for sending missionaries to convert the hearts of princes." Sir Arthur Salter is not naïve but realistic. Carefully guarding against "wishful thinking," he would be the first to admit that Cardinal Fleury's doubt is still crucial and that the problem has become twofold: the education of heads as well as the conversion of hearts. That task is now more difficult because the princes are dictators, soldiers, Prime Ministers, Presidents and peoples. But Sir Arthur gallantly essays it and, an eloquent evangelist, crying in the wilderness, preaches a series of sermons.

One is an old one brought up to date. It deals with the reasons for the deterioration of Europe: the breakdown of the League, the Japanese, Italian and German aggressions, the tragedy of Spain (and to the Western democracies), Munich, the new grouping of powers, present strategical situations and the roads that may possibly lead back to collective security. These are the revision of the peace treaties to eliminate the war-guilt clause and to recognize the changes that force and threats have effected; international agreements on foreign investments, access to raw materials, tariffs and preferences in foreign markets; inter-

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ments, resuscitation of the League and the "working out of a suitable procedure for effecting changes by a peaceful process." These proposals are all familiar. They are almost clichés but, alas, not seductive ones. Sir Arthur has advocated most of this program before and boldly reiterates it even though the chance of action is slender.

His book also contains a detailed, passionless, and for this reason a more devastating, account of the failures of successive British governments to spend competently the huge sums which Parliament was granting for defense preparations. Cabinets refused to think about what these preparations should include. They brushed aside intelligent suggestions from the Commons and the press. In order to win an election Mr. Baldwin deliberately misled the British public and admitted the fact in one of the most amazing confessions ever made by a British Prime Minister. There was shocking ignorance or misrepresentation of Germany's strength. Hidebound by traditions, the services spent their monies in the ways that were the accustomed ones. They almost ignored defense against air warfare and, when they remembered it, spent for bombers rather than for pursuit planes. There was a Minister for the Coördination of Defense, who was not expected to and so did not coöperate. Civilian air-raid precautions were feeble, futile and, in the light of what has subsequently been attempted, ludicrous. Parliamentary criticism had been able to drive three inefficient Air Secretaries from office and in the end has forced a change of program, but the tragic result was that, at the time of Munich, Britain's lack of defense was pleaded as making inevitable the acceptance of great humiliation. The story makes one regret that impeachment is now an obsolete blunderbuss in the British parliamentary arsenal. It also makes one wonder about the efficiency and intelligence of comparable expenditures in the United States, where administrative ability is not demonstrably higher than it is in Great Britain, and where Congress and the press are less inclined to prod and probe.

In these chapters, Sir Arthur writes with high authority. As a former member of the British Civil Service and a high League of Nations official, he knows what good administration is. In the House of Commons he was constantly pressing for measures and changes which Ministers finally accepted, but only when it was too late. Other chapters outline what remains to be done. Here Sir Arthur shows imagination not only in respect of the way that the government should be keyed for military planning and defense, but in respect of the measures that are necessary to mobilize economic power. Some of his proposals are already in effect, but only in part. The Cabinet still seems half-hearted and heads are not yet instructed. There is now a Ministry of Supply, but its powers are poorly defined and it is put—perhaps purposely—under the direction of a Minister who can be little more than a cipher. But if, as is urged, a great part of the system of control of the latter stages of the War were now introduced, the threat to liberties and to parliamentary government would be grave. Perhaps the risk should be taken, but Sir Arthur is so much of a democrat in his own thinking and so certain that good intentions and intelligence can tame power, that he underestimates the anti-democratic forces which his suggested economic controls would release and encourage.

Mass Observation

Britain, by Mass-Observation. A Penguin Special. London: Penguin Books. 6d.

ONE OF THE FEW constructive things created by international crises is an increased desire on the part of the public to learn the news behind the news and so estimate the temper and condition of their own and foreign peoples. With the ruling power of a country, the tendency is usually in the opposite direction: the desire to control and even suppress valid news grows in proportion to the public need for it.

In the United States international involvements have been felt sufficiently to produce a very considerable amount of personal and group studies of popular feeling at home and abroad. In England a growing censorship has hampered similar studies in the general press, and the need for news is now being satisfied to a large extent through the secondary channel of news-letters and dime books.

The organization known as Mass-Observation, and the Penguin Special Library that publishes its findings, are an outcome of the need for news. The 1,500 "observers," who sit in on conversations, public gatherings, family discussions and political meetings throughout England, are the means by which the trends and sympathies of all classes of people are obtained for a central office, sifted, arranged and published. Special districts—whose names "Metrop," "Worktown," etc., point the influence of the Lynds—are set aside for special reportage by more experienced observers, and form the nucleus of a summary of popular feeling in similar districts throughout the country.

The findings published here are infinitely more satisfying than the numerous general articles and books that claim to present English feelings and attitudes. To many Englishmen and most Americans this one small book will give a living picture of people and activities which, heretofore, have scarcely been credited with existence. The most interesting chapters are, of course, the reports on the swings and changes of British public opinion from the advent of Hitler to the time of the Czech crisis. But since the aim of Mass-Observation is to express general tendencies rather than selected studies, the reader is taken through a remarkable series of additional subjects, ranging from astrology, totemism and all-in wrestling to workmen's verbatim accounts of a working day and studies of press reporting and editorial hysteria. Certain of the subjects may seem trivial and unworthy of inclusion, but the bulk of them are here because they loom very large in hundreds of thousands of lives.

The two editors, Charles Madge and Tom Harrisson, are good journalists as well as sound students of opinion. One is constantly finding illuminating touches and observations that a pedant would have ignored or never come across. The verbatim statements of workers, business men, M. P.'s, housewives, ministers, etc., are specially interesting, in themselves and by contrast with one another. The reprinting of crisis editorials and columnists' comments is a fine bit of exposition and is handled with deserved sarcasm. And some of the best is in brief pen-pictures: Chamberlain appearing on

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of Fascist salutes; the scene in the lobby of the House of Commons after the Premier's flight to Berchtesgaden; scenes in Whitehall and other focal streets at the time of the crisis. All in all "Britain" is probably the best topical guide to national feeling that has appeared in a long while, and it is comforting to know that it is one of the most widely read books in England today. NIGEL DENNIS

East of the Hudson

Connecticut Past and Present, by Odell Shepard. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 347 pages. $3.50.

A FORMER NATIVE of Illinois presents us with the most feeling description and interpretation that has ever been written of Connecticut. Professor Odell Shepard, of Trinity College, Hartford, has lived for twenty years in the Nutmeg State: he has traversed her back roads and Indian trails, sought out her creeks and streams, discovered her less obvious charms. He writes with such love and understanding, such tolerant humor, that even the bitter things he must inevitably say in a true analysis of her qualities bear the tenderness of a fond relative rather than the harshness of an analytical stranger.

Dr. Shepard goes far back, past Connecticut's earliest settlers and their piously shady dealings with the Indians, to the glacier that swept down from the north twenty-five thousand years ago, depositing the famous rocks that have had so much to do with forming the character of the Connecticut Yankee. The glacier, he feels, "helped to dower Connecticut with whatever soul she has. If it had left us rich, fat, prosperous, what chance should we ever have had of becoming ourselves?"

He sweeps away a few fine Connecticut myths, reminding us that although this state is often called the cradle of American democracy, her famous leader, Roger Sherman, stated that "the people should have as little to do as possible about government, because they lack information and are liable to be misled." Under Sherman's leadership, after the Revolution, this state with characteristic caution refused to ratify the first ten amendments to the Constitution —the Bill of Rights—and continued "to operate for many years after the Revolution apparently under a charter granted her by a power against which she had revolted." Incidentally, she had still not ratified them in the spring of 1939. She can, however, take due credit for the "Connecticut Plan," which in 1787 had been found workable for over a hundred and fifty years in this state, and which she therefore urged the young federal government to adopt. Dr. Shepard believes "that the federal union of her towns under the control of her General Court provided the diminutive model upon which the Union of these States was constructed. To Connecticut example and skill and persistency we owe the fact that our country is *e pluribus unum*."

In spite of its value as interpretative history, the book is at its best when the author paints an idealized picture of the days when wild turkeys roamed the hills, when modern motor cars had not come to replace the winding Indian trails, when lovely valleys had not been flooded by over-energetic hydraulic companies. Life then was dignified, with the people "of steady habits—orderly development—stability in affairs, and abhorrence of confusion." And Dr. Shepard is cheered by the abandonment of entire industrial areas and by signs that Connecticut is turning back to her farming origin.

He thinks that the recent political scandals are not characteristic of her. Neither are the sweatshops and billboards and filling stations, nor the fact that, although she is one of the wealthier states of the Union, her expenditure for public education, figured on a per-capita basis, is among the lowest in the land. "Connecticut," says Dr. Shepard, "always tries to look and act more materialistic than she really is. One must allow for that. She even deceives herself." MILDRED GILMAN

Gladstone's Life Work

Gladstone and the Irish Nation, by J. L. Hammond. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 768 pages. $12.50.

THE ENGLISH TALENT for politics has failed, since Gladstone died, to cast another statesman in the heroic mold. Lloyd George was the Odysseus of many wiles, beside the grander proportions of this Achilles. Distance, it may be, enables us to recognize his stature the more distinctly, since we note the failure of his successors to approach him. This is the more remarkable since this great career ended in relative failure. The liberation of Ireland came bitterly, and not, as he had planned it, by a spontaneous act of grace; and long before it came Irishmen in the anger of the quarrel over Parnell had forgotten the debt they owed him. The British working class was calling, even before he disappeared, for economic changes and reforms that lay beyond his vision. His contemporaries remembered some foibles of this great man which have lost their importance for us—his sophistry, for example, over trifles. Legends clung to him, invented by the cynicism of partisan controversy, which we can dismiss as baseless.

The man who emerges from this monumental study has more than the grandeur of vitality and faith: he shines by a rare purity of motive. Mr. Hammond has made a portrait that lives and grows as we read. He has grasped what was fundamental in this extremely complex character. The clues to his development can be found by sympathetic insight, and when one has seized them his evolution is seen to be neither capricious nor inconsistent. He was a democrat primarily because his reverence for human personality swept beyond all limitations of class or race, though the economic applications of the democratic idea meant little to him. It was this intense respect for other minds, more especially when he met them in the mass, that won him the love of the English workers, who responded to his habit of taking them at their best.

With a good deal of subtlety, Mr. Hammond brings this democratic attitude into relation with Gladstone's general view of life—his passion for ideas and his lack of interest in the material world, the fundamentalism in theology

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mantic tastes in literature and his devotion to Homeric studies. One asked, as one began this big book, whether it would be possible to isolate Gladstone's part in the history of England's relations with Ireland from the rest of his career, and from the broad stream of world affairs. The answer is that Mr. Hammond is too much the artist to attempt any separation so unreal. He draws his portrait against a firmly sketched background. If there is anything that we miss it is a rather fuller treatment of Gladstone's general opposition to imperialism in relation in Ireland.

But this book is much more than a portrait of Gladstone: it is a detailed narrative, backed by the elaborate study of documents many of them now available for the first time, and fortified by ample quotations—if anything too ample—from letters and memoranda. It is done with the skill in analysis and the grace of style that one expects from the most moving writer and the most persuasive advocate among the English historians of our time. He is never cold; yet he is always just. That one can pass this verdict after reading his account of the tragedy in which Parnell went down, is praise as high as it is deserved. For Mr. Hammond never hesitates, and his judgments even on his hero are as unflinching as his facts are clear-cut. It is easy to recognize the grandeur of Parnell's disdainful pride, but Chamberlain with all his vitality and assurance is a less sympathetic figure. Yet to him also Mr. Hammond is conspicuously fair. He has written a book as generous as it is able.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

No Popery!

The Protestant Crusade, by Ray Allen Billington. New York: The Macmillan Company. 514 pages. $5.

THIS ACCOUNT of the American anti-Catholic movement between 1800 and 1860 should interest a wide audience today. Ever since the academic misconception of American history began to crumble under the influence of Parrington and Beard, a large reading public has been eager to get at vital facts about our national past; and "The Protestant Crusade" is an impressively documented study of a little known but important tendency in that past. It takes on a particularly timely interest in this year of dark omens from abroad. We like to believe that the enemies of democracy are all in Europe, and that the American masses will never lend themselves to campaigns of organized prejudice and violence. But here is a candid story of forty years of rabid propaganda and convent-burning—written by a sober Protestant scholar—which gives a startling picture of certain perversions of democracy that may arise even out of zeal for the democratic faith.

The roots of anti-Catholic feeling were deep in the American consciousness from the beginning, as the author shows very clearly. Most of the settlers were grimly Protestant in faith, feeling with some justification that a feudal, hierarchical Church was incompatible with their ideals of individual liberty. Except in Rhode Island, therefore, Catholics were disfranchised and otherwise oppressed throughout the colonial period.

A far greater liberalism marked the opening decade of the nineteenth century, from the [illegible]

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—Margaret Marshall, *The Nation*

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ever, following the Napoleonic wars, and the reactionary temper of the Holy Alliance, aroused the slumbering patriots to action. There were lurid tales of a foreign conspiracy to weaken the republic by filling it with paupers and criminals and to reconquer the West for absolutism by populating it with Catholics. In the 1820's, therefore, the "No Popery" cry was raised again; and from this appeal to ancient passions, skillfully mixed with more reasonable demands for reform of the immigration laws, the emotional and "intellectual" base was laid for the nativist movements of the next twenty years and the Know-Nothing Party of the 1850's.

Mr. Billington has gone into this period exhaustively; his sober, unexcited chapters are concluded with voluminous notes; his bibliography of anti-Catholic literature (apparently the staple reading matter of the American public from 1825 to 1855) covers sixty pages. The theological tracts he mentions were dull and no doubt ineffectual; the really inflammatory material, for the masses, was found in pamphlets on the licentiousness of priests and nuns —and in such books as "The Awful Disclosures" of the notorious Maria Monk. Although informed observers discredited these infamous documents, the uneducated believed them implicitly, a fact which may explain the wanton burning of convents, and the Philadelphia riots of 1844, in which many homes and churches were destroyed and several lives lost.

The story of those years is not a pretty one, even though Protestant zealots may have honestly believed that they were defending democracy and liberty when they outraged a helpless minority. The author has done a good job of stating the facts, leaving the sickening modern parallels to his readers. Catholics may read it as an apology for the past; the student of history and of current problems should read it as a warning.

REBECCA PITTS

New Books: A Reader's List

THE OPEN SKY, by L. A. G. Strong (Macmillan, $2.50). The strange tale of a doctor who thinks he's crazy until he meets some of the residents of an island off the Irish coast. The wild atmosphere is fine, and the story tears like mad through a lot of gripping episodes—so gripping, in fact, that the reader may not notice the many threads that Mr. Strong drops and never picks up.

FEDERAL AID FOR RELIEF, by Edward Ainsworth Williams (Columbia, $3.25). A study of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration whose creation in 1933 marked the active entrance of the federal government into the field of relief. The FERA operated effectively, on the basis of grants-in-aid to the states, until 1935, when serious shortcomings led to its replacement by the WPA.

THE BISHOP JOTS IT DOWN, by Francis Clement Kelley (Harper's, $3). Autobiography of the Catholic Bishop of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, who served as diplomatic representative of the Church in Mexico, Paris, London and Rome, before being elevated to the episcopate. The Bishop has a shrewd mind, a good eye for character and a sense of humor.

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of sprightly lessons in word usage—spelling, pronunciation, use and meaning, with plenty of common-sense warnings and examples. But, please, Mr. Opdycke, how could you say this (in your definition of "Eunuch," page 308)?— "It has come to mean any sort of chamberlain, but formerly (*and still in a few places in the East and Near East*) it meant a castrated male."

History and Politics

FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY: A Series of Debates, by T. V. Smith and Robert A. Taft (Knopf, $2.50). The text of the debates between Representative Smith of Illinois and Senator Taft of Ohio, as broadcast by NBC this spring. The book reveals Representative Smith as a strong candidate for the post of most articulate and literate Congressman, recently vacated by Maury Maverick.

AN INTRODUCTION TO HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORY, by Tom B. Jones (Harpers, $3.50). A rapid but comprehensive survey: racial backgrounds, geographic influences, the story of conditions up to 1938—with appetizers of romance and adventure.

A HISTORY OF BRAZIL, João Pandiá Calogeras; translated and edited by Percy Alvin Martin (North Carolina, $5). The Inter-America Historical Series, to which this book belongs, is a valuable project that will eventually include a history of each of the leading Latin American countries, by one of its own historians. A scholarly Brazilian statesman does an honest, thorough job, a bit on the dull side.

THE NEW DEAL IN OLD ROME, by H. J. Haskell (Knopf, $2.50). A highly simplified history of Rome written in good American newspaper style. Government in the ancient world had problems and made attempts to solve them—but neither the problems nor the solutions have much in common with those of the New Deal.

Contributors

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H. N. BRAILSFORD is widely known as a writer on history, economics and international affairs.

REBECCA PITTS has contributed to numerous magazines. She is at present in Chicago editing the Indiana Guide for the Federal Writers' Project.